THE Nation

VOLUME CXLII NEW YORK · WEDNESDAY · APRIL 15, 1936 NUMBER 3693

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The Shape of Things

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PROMOTERS WILL REJOICE, BUT INVESTORS should mourn at the Supreme Court decision on the Truth in Securities Act. The court majority of six, again voting in a solid phalanx, has been extremely clever in not declaring the act unconstitutional outright: that would have raised far too much of an outcry. Following the Brandeis technique of not deciding more than has to be decided by the facts of the immediate case, Justice Sutherland has turned the technique to his own uses. He has decided that J. Edward Jones, a New York promoter whose registration statement was believed to contain fraudulent items, could by withdrawing his statement avoid further investigation by the commission and prosecution by the courts. Having thereby very considerably crippled the effective administration of the act, Justice Sutherland goes on blithely to say that "it becomes unnecessary to consider the constitutional validity of the act." Indeed he is right, for as far as any effective check upon fraudulent and unscrupulous issuers of securities is concerned, the act might just as well have been declared unconstitutional. In the words of Justice Cardozo's dissenting opinion—with which Justice Brandeis and Justice Stone joined—"To permit an offending registrant to stifle an inquiry by precipitate retreat on the eve of his exposure is to give immunity to guilt, to encourage falsehood and evasion, to invite the cunning and unscrupulous to gamble with detection. If withdrawal without leave may check investigation before securities have been issued, it may do so thereafter. . . . The statute and its sanctions become the sport of clever knaves."

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THESE ARE HARD AND CUTTING WORDS, AND they come from a judge who is not given to reckless statements. But the tone of Justice Cardozo's dissent, sharp as it is, was sufficiently justified by the enormous consequences that may follow upon the decision and by the nature of Justice Sutherland's opinion. It is by turns excessively legalistic and vaguely rhetorical. It takes the view, in effect, that Mr. Jones's registration of his securities was an isolated individual act with no implications for the public welfare; and that his decision to withdraw it ended the whole matter. It pays no attention to the social importance of the act—the needs that led to it and the purposes it was intended to serve. It strives to maintain a decent ignorance of what is known to everyone else—what, in Justice Cardozo's phrase, "a host of impoverished investors will be ready to attest, that there are dangers in untruths

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and half-truths when certificates masquerading as securities pass current in the market." For a problem that is primarily one of the technique of the control of corporate securities, the majority decision offers as solution a treatise on arbitrary power and autocracy. It conjures up phantoms of the young lawyers of the SEC trying to institute a new Stuart despotism over business. Justice Cardozo's answer will be remembered by future generations for its classic understatement. "A commission which is without coercive powers . . . is likened with denunciatory fervor to the Star Chamber of the Stuarts. Historians may find hyperbole in the sanguinary simile." Historians will also set this decision down as one in a long line by the Supreme Court which so crippled the attempts to regulate business that it led finally to the drastic curbing of the court's power.

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AT FIRST SIGHT THE WAGNER-ELLENBOGEN Housing bill seems a poor substitute for the type of housing legislation which the Administration has promised on numerous occasions. The total expenditure contemplated under the bill during a four-year interval is only $976,000,000, or $98 for each of the 10,000,000 families which Senator Wagner himself estimates to be in need of new housing facilities. Nevertheless, the bill is sound in that it represents the first carefully planned program for providing housing for the low-income groups in our population. In order to make low rents possible, the bill would authorize outright grants not to exceed 45 per cent of the construction costs, coupled with a government loan for the balance at an interest to be fixed by the housing authority which is to be repayable over a period of sixty years. A significant innovation is the recognition of "public housing societies," whose members are low-income families, as the sponsors and lessees of projects. This should not only stimulate the organization of local labor and consumer groups for housing, but also take the curse off federal ownership and administration where there is no local housing authority. Nearly all the organizations interested in low-cost housing are behind the bill, not because it is adequate, but because it represents the only hope of achieving anything at this session of Congress. Its chances of passage at this session are dependent entirely on the President's attitude, which is to say, they depend on the speed with which public pressure can be mobilized behind it.

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THE IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENTS last week took place in the ranks of labor (commented on elsewhere) and among the Socialists. The sweeping victory of the left-wing Socialist group in New York must be hailed as proof that the Socialist rank and file are ready to abandon the sectarian policy once followed with such fatal results by the radical parties of Europe. Compared with these developments the struggles in the Republican primaries seem just shadow-boxing. As was expected, Senator Borah was badly beaten in New York. But the Senator is probably reserving his best oratorical bolts to hurl at "the interests" in the presence of audiences in Illinois cities. The Institute of Public Opinion shows Landon leading the Republicans with 56 per cent of the sample vote, while Borah lags with 20 per cent. The Senator is showing courage, but it seems clear that he is waging a losing fight in his paradoxical attempt to clean "the interests" out of the Republican Party. It is a little difficult to understand what would be left if he succeeded. Meanwhile Mr. Hoover continues to thwack the New Deal in once-bright phrases that tarnish with every passing week. It is worth noting that in his Fort Wayne speech on April 4 his anxiety to prove that he did not leave the country in ruins was so great as to lead him to twist some figures. He cited the A. F. of L. figures which show 12,600,000 unemployed now, and compared them with the estimate of 11,600,000 at Mr. Roosevelt's election. Unfortunately he used the revised A. F. of L. estimate for today and the old estimate for 1932. According to the revised estimates there were 15,653,000 unemployed when Mr. Hoover left office in March, 1933.

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AIDED BY THE USE OF POISON GAS AND THE aerial bombardment of unfortified towns, the Italian army appears to have dealt a crushing blow to the Ethiopians of the northern front. For the first time since the beginning of hostilities last October the Ethiopians were forced into an open conflict, to which there could be only one outcome. Granting that the Italian reports of the utter rout of Haile Selassie's Imperial Guard may have been touched up for home consumption, there can be little doubt that Mussolini has finally gained the upper hand. This does not mean, however, that the war is necessarily nearing its end. Hundreds of miles of mountainous territory lie between the advance guard of the Italian troops and the rich highland country surrounding Addis Ababa. Merely to penetrate this territory unharassed by opposing forces would require weeks of careful preparation. With the rainy season approaching, the chances are that the Ethiopian troops, though scattered, can still carry on an effective guerrilla campaign. Should the League suddenly rouse itself from its stupor and take its long-threatened action of prohibiting Italy from importing oil, coal, and steel, there would still be a chance that Mussolini might never enjoy the fruits of his mad adventure.

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GERMANY'S REJECTION OF THE POWERS' peace proposals marks a complete victory for Nazi diplomacy. A month ago all the Nazi leaders, including Hitler himself, were extremely apprehensive regarding the reaction of the powers to the unilateral abrogation of the Locarno agreement, and they have been surprised and gratified by the failure of the League to adopt stronger measures. Primary responsibility for the collapse of collective security obviously rests with Great Britain. And behind Britain's weakness lies a serious factional struggle in the National Government. The pro-Nazi faction, which includes, among others, Sir John Simon, Viscount Hailsham, and Viscount Monsell, has not only prevented the Cabinet from supporting punitive action against Germany but is now opposing the consultation of the military staffs

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of the former Allies. Mr. Lloyd George has also come out violently against the staff talks on the ground that similar contact between the general staffs was largely responsible for drawing England into the World War. On the other hand, the dominant faction in the Cabinet, represented by Captain Eden, Alfred Duff Cooper, and the two Chamberlains, has supported the consultations as the one remaining means of curbing Nazi aggression. With the control of the government at stake, following the early retirement of Baldwin, the fate of Europe may be determined by wholly extraneous political maneuvers within the ranks of the Conservative Party.

*

THE REPORTED JAPANESE-GERMAN MILITARY agreement serves as further illustration of the danger of allowing Hitler to have his way in the Rhineland. While rumors of such an understanding have been afloat for many months, the story comes this time from a source which cannot be ignored—an informant close to the British Foreign Office. If it is true, and there is every reason to believe that it is, the German protestations of peace can only be interpreted as a temporary maneuver to divert attention from the plan for a concerted attack on the Soviet Union. In order to carry out this program with as little difficulty as possible, Germany has left no stone unturned in its effort to sabotage the principle of collective security. It has insisted on bilateral as against multilateral non-aggression pacts, and has consistently refused to enter into negotiations for a general treaty of mutual assistance against aggression. While the remilitarization of the Rhineland was prompted primarily by the pressure of Germany's internal crisis, its timing was very likely the result of Hitler's determination to prevent the League from being strengthened by the imposition of oil sanctions against Italy. Unlike certain British statesmen, he is aware that fascism and collective security are incompatible.

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THE ROMAN HOLIDAY THAT THE LINDBERGH-Hauptmann case provided is familiar to persons not only in every part of the United States but in every quarter of the globe. Its first aspect was a sublimely hideous example of American hero-baiting. It went on through scene after scene of sadistic persecution, first of Colonel Lindbergh and his wife, and later of Hauptmann himself. Millions of words described the spectacle; millions of copies of newspapers were sold, in thousands of editions, to carry it on; millions of dollars were probably taken in by the newspaper exploiters of the greatest human-interest story ever sent to bless the yellow—and the not so yellow—press. An interesting sidelight is the suggestion that William Randolph Hearst bore a personal grudge against Colonel Lindbergh for the latter's efforts, along with those of his father-in-law, to bring peace in Mexico when Mr. Hearst wanted intervention to protect his holdings there. This, though it makes an American public which is avid for sensationalism a little less the villain of the piece, merely adds to the macabre fantasy. And not the least fantastic was the end, when the political ambitions of a Governor of New Jersey imposed upon a human being the torture of three times facing the electric chair before the final shock was administered. There must have been a great number of Americans to whom the spectacle of making news copy of human misery was thoroughly repugnant. Yet in spite of them, in spite of common decency, humanity, and civilization, the incredible drama went on. The only thing that emerges from it without question is the brutality and stupidity of capital punishment. Without the shadow that the electric chair cast over the case, a good deal of the play would never have taken place.

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THE WAR-PROFITS BILL FACES DRASTIC REVISION at the hands of the Senate Finance Committee as a result of "privately delivered testimony" to the effect that war-time production might be stifled by too severe war taxation. Where it has been proposed to take 99 per cent of individual incomes over $10,000 and all but 3 per cent of corporate income, the committee has decided on a graduated schedule higher in the lower brackets and reaching a maximum of 70 or 80 per cent. At the same time the tax on incomes under $10,000 is to be increased. No device has so far been invented which is powerful enough to thwart the profit-making instinct of modern capital once it is turned into the arena of war. Price-fixing and the excess-profits tax, on the basis of their World War record, do not fulfil their purpose of "taking profits out of war." Nevertheless, any legislation which tends to dim the prospect of war profits has its uses in dampening the war spirit among our dividend patriots. And the average citizen whose own regimentation is so carefully mapped out in the War Department's industrial-mobilization plan could not put a penny to better use than in sending a postcard to his representatives in Congress urging passage of the war-profits bill in its original form.

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WHILE FRANCE AND ENGLAND SIMMER IN AN atmosphere of mutual mistrust, French and British intellectuals have managed to maintain a united front. A joint manifesto has been issued by the Comité de Vigilance des Intellectuels Antifascistes and the Society for Intellectual Liberty, whose presidents are respectively Paul Langevin and Aldous Huxley, urging collective action along specific lines as the only way of dealing with the crisis. Beginning with a vigorous blast against the British peace-at-any-price attitude, it calls the unilateral denunciation of Locarno "politically, juridically, and morally indefensible," and concludes with proposals calling for general, simultaneous disarmament, a reconsideration of the economic difficulties of all countries, and the enactment of a universal treaty of peace recognizing "the absolute equality of rights and duties." Unfortunately these proposals will be dismissed by the diplomats as visionary and impractical; and, indeed, with the post-war experience of shattered pacts and broken pledges no one can blame the diplomats for being hard-boiled. But the real worth of the manifesto lies in its proof that in the realm of the mind a unity can still exist which cuts across political allegiances.

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The Coming Labor Party

THE formation of Labor's Non-Partisan League, with Major Berry of NRA fame as its sponsor, John L. Lewis as one of its supporters, and Mr. Roosevelt's reelection as its goal, indicates that at least one more Presidential year must pass before labor assumes its full political responsibility. At the same time it is apparent that Mr. Lewis and some of his allies in the Committee for Industrial Organization are not entering the Roosevelt coalition with a faith as blind as Major Berry's that labor will find its salvation in a Democratic heaven. And the drift of events makes it compulsory for all progressives to reexamine the possibilities and block out a course for an effective radical party.

Traditionally, third parties have been born in the West. That most of them have also died there is not without its lesson. The West, with its regionalism, its economic naivete, and its frontier conditioning, has been the easy prey for the more innocent brands of demagogy such as Townsendism, Utopianism, and Epic, as well as the home ground of the more solid agricultural and reform movements represented by the La Follettes and Olson. By the same token these movements have for the most part been turned to the uses of the old parties which control the local and state political machines. The faith that an effective radical party will spring full-fledged out of the West must be checked against the fact that the impulse to rebellion there is so strong, yet so untutored that it must be corraled and trained with the utmost realism.

The truth is that a genuine radical party will come out of a soil which runs much deeper than regionalism. Labor —farm and factory, organized and unorganized, employed and unemployed—alone can give such a party a nation-wide mass base. A new party must be a labor and not a liberal party. Aside from the increasing difficulty of liberalism in maintaining itself over the widening chasm between economic groups, a liberal party can never hope to overcome the hazard of a Roosevelt whose words—and even a few of his deeds—will plague it at every crossroads.

Politically American labor is in the earliest stages of mobilization. The dead hand of craft unionism, which was never capable of political action if only for the reason that by its nature it can have no mass basis, has not yet been thrown off. The movement for industrial unionism in the mass-production industries is barely beginning. There is not the slightest doubt that this new movement will tap sources of strength and devotion in yet unorganized millions. Moreover, it must inevitably move into the political field, for the motive force of industrial unionism is the collective principle that the individual worker can hope for no permanent advancement except in so far as all workers advance. At present, however, the great body of labor is not even organized; economically and politically it is illiterate and untrained as far as its own interests are concerned. Therefore any attempt to lead this raw army into a national venture must be undertaken only with the greatest caution and after the most careful preparation.

This does not mean that the impulse toward political action which is operating more and more forcefully in every community should not be encouraged. On the contrary the new growth should be carefully nurtured, but on its own terms. A political party, like any other organism, is made up of small units. Those units must be first of all genuine living bodies indigenous to their communities, not bubbles of wishful thinking floating in a national ferment. This means that they must have a labor, that is, a trade-union base; it means also that they must conduct systematic and always difficult campaigns of education and organization. The raw regiments of labor, in a word, must learn to fight by capturing local objectives, both economic and political.

There are plenty of models available for the kind of hard work we have in mind. The share-croppers in Alabama and Arkansas are learning economics and politics in day-by-day lessons which they can never forget. Their unions are being shaped into fighting instruments literally under fire. "The raids," reads a letter from Birmingham, "sort of interrupt the work." Local 574 in Minneapolis is the center of a vigorous labor movement which long ago became an important factor in local and state politics and whose influence has spread far beyond its original limits. The Maritime Federation on the West Coast has steadily extended its influence until the Gulf ports are already lined up under a second maritime federation and the Atlantic Coast must eventually follow the same path. In a few communities labor parties have been formed which actually have a chance of electing local and state officials and of exercising genuine political power. The movement to form a labor party in Akron, where a notable labor battle has just been fought, is eminently sound. Such a line of specific advance offers the most constructive path toward a national farmer-labor party.

All this means that a new farmer-labor party must build solidly and realistically, and must not be betrayed into wishful thinking. We welcome the desire of the Minnesota convention to explore the whole problem of launching a national ticket this year. If the action of Minnesota meets with enough response from other local and state groups to force the calling of a national convention, that will be answer enough from the rank and file to the doubts that are being raised as to where they stand. But even when such a convention meets, its chief importance will still be the effect it will have on the Congressional and state elections. There can be no question of electing a President this year. But a national ticket and a national platform may easily form a rallying-point around which the local forces can gather. They may be able to return a bloc of Senators and Congressmen who will work more cohesively in Washington than any have done thus far, and they may be able also to send some state and local administrations to victory. But the most important consideration is that whatever local gains are made politically will help the struggle for economic organization and education, and thus aid in creating a long-run trade-union base for a really powerful farmer-labor party.

For the long run the situation looks more favorable

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than it does today. The depression stripped large sections of the population of their fondest economic illusions. The New Deal advanced the process of education by arousing hopes and then dashing them. The new depression now preparing may be expected to sharpen the divergent interests of economic groups to the point where they will be compelled to compete for political power in their own true guises. When that time comes—and it may be in 1940 or it may be in 1944—the minorities that benefit from the present economic chaos will be found arrayed against the large majority whose interests lie in the direction of a socialized state. Then, and only then, will labor and its allies among the farmer and other middle-class groups face a real test of their strength.

Is Child Labor Abolished?

A TELEGRAM from Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, was received on March 31 by the New York State Senate Judiciary Committee which is conducting hearings on the child-labor amendment. President Butler, like many other estimable persons, is opposed to the amendment, not because he believes children ought to work for hire, but because he fears undue "control" by Congress of "persons under eighteen"—whom Mr. Butler refuses to admit are children. One sentiment in his telegram of protest is worth quoting: "We have the word of the President of the United States, who three times publicly repeated that child labor is no longer to be found in this country. Let it lie in the graveyard where public opinion buried it many years ago."

President Butler of course is a busy man, and perhaps he does not get around much. It is possible that he forgets, first, that President Roosevelt's remarks about the abolition of child labor referred to the NIRA, under which it was practically abolished in coded industries; and, second, that Mr. Roosevelt has at least "three times publicly repeated" that he is in favor of the adoption of the child-labor amendment. A few figures from the Children's Bureau in Washington which apply to conditions since the NIRA was declared unconstitutional may help to unsettle Mr. Butler from his Olympian calm. Figures from 129 cities in 29 states for the seven-month period after the NIRA expired show an increase of 58 per cent in the number of employment certificates issued to children fourteen and fifteen years of age. In New York State the National Child Labor Committee finds that for the last four months of 1935 issuance of work permits rose 400 per cent over the corresponding period for 1934. The figures themselves are interesting: Certificates for fourteen-year-olds rose from 266 to 570; for fifteen-year-olds, from 1,139 to 4,659. During the same months permits for sixteen-year-olds declined from 8,730 to 8, 424. The jobs are now being given to younger "persons" who presumably work for lower wages than either their older brothers and sisters or their fathers and mothers, who are consequently in large part unemployed.

There are many persons to whom statistics are always cold and unenlightening. Perhaps President Butler is one of these. For them the National Child Labor Committee presents in its bulletin each month some case histories which paint a more graphic picture. A few of them are as follows:

> The girl at the machine. At fifteen, Mary had left school and was working in a drapery factory in New York City, eight hours a day and forty hours a week for $5.
>
> Where sixty minutes make a nickel. "The most you can make in an hour is a nickel," says Florence, speaking of putting strings of woolen on cards. Florence is only twelve, but she . . . works on the cards of woolen strings every night until midnight.
>
> Of forty children working on a single onion farm in Michigan in the summer of 1935, sixteen were thirteen years of age or younger. One of the boys drove them out to the farm every day and back again. . . . The boy driver had neither driver's nor chauffeur's license. Another of the boys "doubled" with a job in a local store on Saturday nights in addition to his sixty-hour week in the onion fields.
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> Shortly before Christmas an investigator for the National Child Labor Committee found Ellen, a youngster of ten and a half years, working on lampshades in her tenement home in New York. . . . She said she had been doing this work since she was seven years old, and that even her little sister, only four and half, sometimes helped. On Friday and Saturday nights, Ellen said, she worked until midnight; but on other nights only until 10 or 10:30.

It is not to be expected that President Butler will be impressed by this evidence that child labor is all too unhappily not abolished in this country. Nor will it impress other opponents of the amendment whose objections are not honestly legalistic, as are his, but all too practical. It is true that in New York State, at least, local laws prohibiting the labor of children are in effect—though perhaps not always enforced. But in many other states, particularly in the South, there are no such laws. And as a result manufacturers who are on the look-out for cheap labor—and the cheapest labor is that of children—move their mills and factories to localities where they will not be interfered with. This is the shameful background for the fight against adoption of a federal restriction.

The fight has now been going on for twelve years. Before 1933 only six states had ratified; in 1933, under the impetus of the NRA, fourteen were added; the total now is twenty-four, out of a necessary thirty-six. At this rate ratification may take years longer. But at the recent Albany hearing 90 per cent of the argument and the applause was on the side of adoption. For the first time, it is believed by those close to the movement, there is a chance not only for the amendment to be reported out of committee but for its passage in the Senate. While there is this much life and hope, all possible pressure should be exerted on the New York legislators. Favorable action in New York would go far to hearten and instruct other states in which a vote will be taken either this year or next.

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Mulcting the Aged

IF THE purpose of the Townsend inquiry was to strip the movement of its political power, the House's strategy has apparently been successful. A movement of this type is practically immune to charges of corruption and fraud, but it is peculiarly susceptible to internal dissension such as the inquiry has provoked. The investigation has brought out little that was not already common knowledge, but it has put the Townsend leaders distinctly on the defensive. Previously they could simply deny all accusations brought against them. As early as last October *The Nation* published an article by Richard Neuberger pointing out that the movement was a veritable gold mine for its organizers. It cited charges of Frank Peterson, former national publicity director for Dr. Townsend, that Clements and Townsend were making $2,000 a week from the *Townsend Weekly,* and alleged that Dr. Townsend had received substantial sums which were not turned over to the treasury of the organization. All these charges were vigorously denied at the time by Dr. Townsend and Mr. Clements, and there were even veiled hints of a libel suit, which they subsequently proved "too busy" to prosecute.

In his testimony before the investigating committee Mr. Clements has made no effort to deny that the Townsend movement has proved extremely profitable for its founders. He has confessed to an income of $12,585 in 1935, and admitted that the organization also paid the rent of his $215-a-month apartment, his grocery and electric bills, the wages of his servants, and all traveling expenses. No one appears to know the total receipts of the organization, or what disposal has been made of them. Mr. Clements estimated the total income, excluding profits on the *Townsend Weekly* and the Prosperity Publishing Company, to be $952,000,000, but five auditors have been at work for a week on the books of the organization without being able to reconcile the cash books, the control ledgers, and the bank statements of the Old Age Revolving Pensions, Ltd. The profits of the *Townsend Weekly* have not yet been revealed, but Clements is known to have received $50,000 for his share in the paper. In addition there are other sums, like the $1,700 which Dr. Townsend obtained at a mass-meeting for his proposed third party, the present status of which is cloaked in mystery.

It's a Great Idea—for Some People

It is difficult to see how anyone can read the sordid details brought out by the investigation without indignation against the men who have taken advantage of millions of needy old men and women. Prior to this investigation there has been a tendency to place the blame for the financial chicanery exclusively on promoters such as Clements and Edward J. Margett, manager for northern California. But the recent disclosures seem to indicate that Dr. Townsend was not wholly unaware of the lucrative possibilities of the movement. Before passing too harsh judgment on these men as individuals, however, it might be wise to recognize that their activity has a parallel in more respectable quarters. The recently announced plan of the Republican Party to collect a million dollars from a million individuals to "save America from dictatorship" is very much on the same moral plane as the dime-a-month collected by the Townsend movement.

Moreover, we should not allow our indignation against Clements and Townsend to obscure the fact that the Townsend movement has rendered a great service to the country by dramatizing the insecurity of our aged persons. For years a few individuals have been vainly preaching the need of adequate old-age pensions. But it took the organizing genius of a Clements to translate this need into terms of political action. It is true that the Townsend plan as originally proposed was utterly fantastic. Payment of $200 a month to the 12,400,000 persons who are over sixty years of age at the present time would require nearly $30,000,000,000 annually—or approximately 60 per cent of our national income. A transaction tax sufficiently high to raise this amount would double the present cost of living. Yet the effect of the proposal has not been wholly bad. It may yet be possible to harness the enthusiasm behind the movement to a legitimate social-security program. Reduce the pension from $200 a month to $50, obtain the funds by a levy on incomes rather than by taxing the masses, eliminate the absurd necessity of spending the entire amount within thirty days, and the program becomes far more defensible than the old-age provisions of the Administration's Social Security Act. With all its absurdities the Townsend movement will have served a useful purpose if it forces a reconsideration of that act.

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WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Chairman Berry

Lewis, Berry, and Roosevelt

NONE of the "important" developments of the week seems to me so vitally related to the public's welfare as the formation here a few days ago of Labor's Non-Partisan League. This new organization, despite the fact that it has George L. Berry at its helm and was formed primarily to promote Roosevelt's reelection, contains the germ of the most promising third-party movement the country has yet seen. It contains that seed because its actual organizers are men of proved leadership, heads of large and powerful unions who, in addition to having imagination, humor, and boldness, speak the language of the great mass of Americans instead of the Marxian dialect, which to those masses is just so much frightening gibberish. They also have the patience, the hardness, and the talent for administrative detail so fatally lacking in those who to date have attempted to lead the third-party movements. I refer, of course, to John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, and Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and in so speaking of them I do not canonize them but stop and wait with fingers crossed for them to produce the fruits of which they are capable.

Meanwhile let me note a few facts about the league and its origin. Its gestation—by Hillman out of Lewis—was remarkably brief and hurried. What brought it into being almost overnight and without advance notice was the fact that Dan Tobin, czar of the teamsters and one of the least admirable of American labor leaders, was all set to be handed by Jim Farley the chairmanship of a committee to direct Roosevelt's reelection campaign in labor circles. Tobin's appointment, typical of Farley's talent for choosing the worst forces in every field with which to make campaign alliances, would have been a feather in the cap of the A. F. of L.'s reactionary high command. By the same token it would have been a blow to the Committee for Industrial Organization, in which Lewis and Hillman are the ringleaders, if for no other reason than that Tobin typifies the kind of labor leadership that the C. I. O. forces threaten far more than they threaten craft unionism. Tobin's acute realization of this fact has led him recently to circularize all teamsters' locals with an edict commanding them under threat of expulsion to shun the C. I. O. and all its friends as they would the plague.

To thwart Tobin and his henchmen, the Non-Partisan League was rushed into existence by Hillman and Lewis. To give it the guise of an Administration-created agency, they picked Berry as its chairman and let him announce the league's creation—with the aid of a government-employed press agent—less than twenty-four hours after Roosevelt had granted a zero-hour extension of Berry's term as Coordinator for Industrial Cooperation. The announcement surprised and chagrined the Democratic National Committee, which had not been consulted, stunned Bill Green, and infuriated Tobin and his pals. Berry lost no time in stating that the primary purpose of the league was to line up all organized labor's votes for Roosevelt's reelection. Berry's presence at its helm was a sufficient guaranty to the capital press corps that the league had no other purpose. He is known to the corps as a man who indubitably idolizes Roosevelt and, in addition, could not under any consideration be lured away from the Democratic Party. A Tennesseean of slight literacy, some animal intelligence, and sufficient cunning to capture and hold the presidency of the printing pressmen's union, Berry will make an admirable foil for the Hillman-Lewis purposes so long as there is his loyalty to Roosevelt to hold him in line. Roosevelt, to be sure, is the immediate gainer by the combination, for it is one that will get votes.

Ultimately, however, Roosevelt may lose by the combination, for if he wins reelection, as seems certain, he will want to dictate the choice of his successor in 1940, and here Labor's Non-Partisan League, or its successor and assigns, promises to stand in the way. It was not for nothing that the word "non-partisan" was inserted in the league's name. It was the careful choice of Lewis and Hillman, and signalizes their determination to keep the league from being a mere adjunct of the Democratic machine. It was their way of serving notice that the league reserves the right, outside the Presidential race, to support Progressives, Socialists, Farmer-Laborites, or any other candidates in state and Congressional elections whom its members believe would best serve the interests of the working class.

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It is no secret that neither Hillman nor Lewis believes in the divinity of Roosevelt. Once Roosevelt has served their purpose by getting a new lease on the White House so that Liberty Leaguers may be held at bay for another four years, Lewis and Hillman are prepared to use that breathing spell to build up labor's fortifications and organize a movement that will have chances of success in 1940.

MEANWHILE, all sorts of traditionally important things have been happening in the halls of government these last few days. The Supreme Court, in the Sugar Institute case, refused to rewrite the anti-trust laws to the taste of the trade-association boys, and though contributing nothing new to the implementing of those laws, kept alive the factor of uncertainty of prosecution, which is the sole functioning deterrent to the monopolists. . . . A House committee rushed through hearings on the new tax bill, with Republican members chuckling over the panic into which their Democratic colleagues were thrown when a Communist Party representative testified in favor of the major tax proposal of the Administration. . . . A Senate committee under the prodding of Michigan's Vandenberg —who seems increasingly to be the most likely Republican choice for President—voted to require publication of the names of all firms and persons who have received AAA benefit payments in excess of $1,000, together with the exact amounts they received and what they received them for. The list, while it will not erase the basic price-boosting tenet of the Administration's farm program, will destroy the emotional, help-the-poor-toiling-farmer appeal which made enactment of that program possible . . . . Preliminary plans were laid for a Senatorial investigation of the War and Navy departments, with the object of exposing the dunderheaded incompetence of the generals and admirals and thus lessening the effectiveness of their pleas as "experts" for bigger armies, bigger navies. . . . Secretary Hull imposed an embargo on tin-plate scrap exports under a recently enacted law aimed chiefly at Japan. . . . The Capitol heard that Italy to a significant if not considerable degree is circumventing this government's attempts to curtail its munitions supply by having its agents in this country encourage Italian-Americans to send Easter greetings to their relatives at home on paper-thin cards of solid copper, sold for five cents and mailed in ordinary envelopes. It is said that thousands of dollars' worth of copper has reached Italy in this fashion.

THE FCC, continuing its investigation of "the world's largest private enterprise," turned its searchlight on the far-flung lobbying activities of the A. T. and T., which, according to Walter Gifford, its $206,000-a-year "front," always puts the public interest ahead of its private ambitions out of respect for its own strength and the nation's generosity in permitting it the privileges of monopoly. The searchlight showed the company's agents using, with the knowledge and consent of their superiors, all the sordid tricks in the lobbyists' bag to defeat social and labor legislation, tax-reform measures, and resolutions for the investigation of the public-service commissions that fix the rates of the company's operating subsidiaries. In Kansas, because it was "hard enough to get a hung jury now," the company's lobbyists fought a resolution for a public referendum to permit a two-thirds' jury vote to decide civil cases; in New York they fought a bill to require jury trial in labor-injunction cases because a single juror might "frustrate" justice. Finally, before recessing the hearings until April 14, the investigators disclosed Mr. Gifford, talking privately to fellow-officers of the Bell system, as saying that when he hears a business man vow that his concern puts the public interest ahead of its private interest, he says to himself, "Oh, bunk!"

SECRETARY WALLACE saw the Senate by a vote of thirty-two to eighteen take a step toward putting the Administration farm-relief thesis into actual operation. That thesis is that agriculture's current ills arise largely out of a lack of balance due to industrial prices being frozen while agricultural prices remain flexible to the point of liquidity. The New Deal has attempted to correct this by freezing farm prices too, whereas, if the thesis expounded by Wallace and his cohorts is correct, proper treatment would call for a thawing out on the industrial side of the scale. The Murphy amendment to the Packers and Stockyards Act, drafted by Wallace's lieutenants and adopted Thursday by the Senate, is a step in that direction. It would put the packers—who in recent years have doubled their share in the consumers' meat dollar, while the farmers' share has been halved—under stringent federal regulation, forcing them to keep books and accounts according to federal dictates. It is not so strong a measure as the

Secretary Wallace

Capper bill for which it was substituted under pressure by Connally of Texas, who speaks for the big cattlemen. The Capper bill, in addition to doing all the Murphy bill prescribes, would have given the Secretary of Agriculture jurisdiction over the 600 direct-buying stations the packers have set up throughout the country in the last few years. This direct-buying system, it is charged, results in a concentration of low-grade cattle at Chicago to make the market price-base on which the packers' agents then proceed to buy up high-grade stock at the field stations.

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Our Number One Fascists

BY EVELYN SEELEY

LOCAL chambers of commerce rank second only to the American Legion as "agencies of repression and attacks upon minority movements," according to the last annual report of the American Civil Liberties Union. With the Legion apparently preparing to default, local chambers may step up and claim top honors. In New Jersey the Legion recently declared its opposition to teachers' oath laws sponsored by Hearst; in New York 100 Legion representatives voted to uphold freedom of speech even for those who espouse "dangerous" ideas. If this new attitude prevails, the field is clear for the local chambers, with the Daughters of the American Revolution trailing quite a stretch behind.

Local chambers show no signs of recanting. They stand firm in a pattern that varies only with local conditions—strike-breaking (open or secret), red-baiting, company-union promotion, fostering of "runaway shops" with their lowering of wage levels and working conditions, open-shop propaganda, keeping education "safe," checking "subversive activities" that cover as broad a field as Mrs. Dilling's network. Each local makes its own program according to its needs, but a plan found effective in one community quickly spreads to another. New devices catch on, but the pattern itself is old.

A high-pressure campaign for new armories is beginning in Montana and California, sponsored by local chambers. The armories will house military units and more modern equipment and will also be useful, chamber members explain, as "civic auditoriums." Labor growled so loudly in Great Falls, Montana, that the chamber there dropped the campaign like a hot potato, but in California the plan has met only enthusiasm. It is centered in Santa Rosa, where labor troubles have been plentiful and harshly dealt with and where last summer a radical labor leader was tarred and feathered.

"What we want to do," said L. L. Baleisen, industrial secretary of the Brooklyn, New York, chamber, "is to destroy the whole A. F. of L. It's a racket from top to bottom. . . . Oh, we're not against unions. In fact, we help to organize lots of them."

Baleisen has done his part. When the National Labor Relations Board, on December 27, 1935, held him guilty of coercion for promoting and cherishing a company union at the Atlas Bag and Burlap Company in Brooklyn, Baleisen admitted he had been active in some 200 labor disputes, and had made it a practice to bring about agreements under which strikes were prohibited. "I did my duty," he said, "to protect Brooklyn industry."

The New York Board of Trade, which functions as a local chamber of commerce and is affiliated with the United States Chamber of Commerce, last month launched a campaign to illegalize strikes, on the ground that "the time has come to protect the interests of workmen and employers alike." "Unions are rackets, the shame of our cities," the board stated in a letter calling the first meeting. "Let us stamp out this malignant growth!" It backed its declaration with the fantastic statement that eleven to fifteen billion dollars, half the national income, goes annually to racketeers.

Charles Mariner recently boasted to the Hi-Twelve Club of San José, California, that the California State Chamber of Commerce had spent $50,000 in labor disturbances, framing organizers when evidence was not sufficient to convict them, and using physical violence when necessary. Mariner, according to Alfred Aram, a San José attorney who wrote to Attorney General U. S. Webb demanding an investigation, "clearly implied that the purpose of such physical violence was to bring home to the persons involved the pressing necessity of choosing between physical safety and constitutional rights."

California locals have won a lot of credit for their anti-union, strike-breaking, red-baiting methods. The San José chamber has done its part in winning for Santa Clara County, of which it is the capital, the name of "cradle of American fascism." It helped whip up the terror that followed the general strike of 1934 by signing up a "committee of safety" in its offices, although it disclaimed connection with the vigilantes who attempted to enforce safety by means of night raids and pickax handles. In Los Angeles the chamber currently blesses and backs the barring of "vagrants" at the state border. Los Angeles's notorious red squad operated for a long time out of the Chamber of Commerce building. In both Los Angeles and San Francisco the sons of wealthy industrialists are flocking to join the Junior Chamber of Commerce under a program more frankly vicious than the senior chamber ever admitted.

In San Francisco the Industrial Association functioned as chief strike-breaking machine during the general strike of 1934, but when it was all over J. W. Mailliard, Jr., president of the San Francisco chamber, pledged his organization to the protection of "public and private rights." "We must realize," he said, "that the security of San Francisco can never be guaranteed until the clean-up of agitators in our community has been complete to the last man."

These incidents are typical of what happens in many places. Somebody else—vaguely called a "committee of safety," "committee of 500," or "citizens' committee"—does the dirty work of breaking the strike and promoting the post-strike terror; then the chamber, having kept its name pure, emerges to deliver resounding pats on the back.

In Oregon the chamber has been quite open about it. During the 1934 longshoremen's strike, the chamber up-

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held the mayor when two pickets were shot for throwing stones at a freight train. And during the lumber strike of last summer it upheld Governor Martin when he ordered state police to take pickets and "paddle 'em down the road."

Members of the chamber played an open role in labor difficulties in the state of Washington too, but, in Tacoma at least, their action has proved a boomerang. Keeping up membership is difficult, and the chamber's prestige has fallen so low that it dare not openly sponsor anything it wants put over. Two years ago the Tacoma chamber purchased submachine-guns and tear-gas and nausea-gas bombs and donated the supplies to the police department, ostensibly to use against gangsters. Nobody took this explanation seriously, however, since Tacoma boasts few gangsters who rate such heroic treatment. M. J. Muckey, a chamber employee and an army reserve captain, with the blessing of his superiors organized local reserve officers into flying squadrons for use at a moment's notice. These men are armed, and their mobilization plan is extremely efficient.

The chamber functioned during the longshoremen's strike of 1934 as the Citizens' Emergency Committee, headed by John Prins, then also president of the chamber. This committee organized the waterfront employers, furnished office workers, raised a slush fund for advertising and another for the purchase of weapons and the importation of "finks." It happened that local police drove the imported gunmen out of town, but they were used elsewhere —notably in Seattle, where a similar "committee" masked the activities of the chamber.

During last summer's lumber strike the Citizens' Emergency Committee blossomed out as the Committee of 200 in Tacoma and the Committee of 500 in Seattle, each a front for the respective chamber. They raised a large sum of money with which they launched extensive advertising campaigns, using the same copy throughout the Northwest and merely changing the name of the sponsor. Seattle's committee was headed by Alfred Lundin, then president of the chamber. He had a regular radio period in which he pointed out the dangers to American liberties in organized labor. Mr. Lundin is still active with the Seattle chamber, and his latest exploit was to organize the Washington Industrial Council, an employers' organization which seeks to use the same tactics as the National Manufacturers' Association.

Publicly owned utilities naturally are anathema to local chambers, whose duty it is to promote private business. In Portland, Oregon, the chamber is working with all its might and main to forestall a Columbia Valley Authority at the giant Grand Coulee and Bonneville power projects. The Brooklyn chamber was found to have received $21,250 from the Consolidated Gas Company, along with others in a Citizens' Committee of 500, to fight Mayor LaGuardia's "yardstick plan" for gas distribution.

Chambers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts are taking a leading role in the "runaway-employer" picture. This activity of theirs particularly hits the strong garment workers' unions in the East. Chambers are offering financial aid, free rent, free power, sometimes outright gifts of factories to induce clothing manufacturers to flee from the cities' high business and labor standards. Mayors, police chiefs, and sheriffs back up the local chambers with guaranties of low wages and "no labor trouble." They restrict picketing, run organizers out of town, arouse the citizenry to undercut labor in the name of patriotism.

Open-shop agitation by chambers is widespread and an old story. The Dallas Open Shop Association, housed in the Chamber of Commerce building, is particularly militant and has prevented unions from gaining much of a foothold in a bad sweatshop center. In Des Moines, Iowa, the Business Men's Association, with which the chamber is unofficially connected. ran five advertisements of this nature:

> Question: How would the "closed-shop" principle affect the welfare and prosperity of all citizens?
>
> Answer: Firms considering locating in Des Moines would give this city a wide berth to locate in a community where men who are willing and want to work are permitted to work, regardless of whether or not they belong to and pay dues to some organization. Des Moines has many establishments that employ a large number of people and are important factors in the prosperity of the city. If the "closed-shop" principle were cracked down on them, isn't it probable that all, or a large number of such firms, would quickly seek locations elsewhere? Des Moines would be kept in the throes of constant bickerings and disputes. Thus all citizens would be forced to pay the price, in one way or another, if Des Moines should become a "closed-shop" town.

The Association of Commerce of New Orleans has a committee called the Subversive Activities Subcommittee of the National Defense Committee, the general committee headed by Colonel L. Kemper Williams, a military man and wealthy lumber dealer. Last year, although its activities are secret, it tried to bar from a high-school building the New Orleans Forum, a group which presented lectures on capitalism, fascism, socialism, and communism. It aided in the removal of a charity-organization official who had a liberal viewpoint. Two newspaper publishers connected with it last year were not reappointed lest their participation "embarrass" them.

Red-baiting agencies get a formidable background of information from the United States Chamber of Commerce, which sends out, to a select public, confidential pamphlets called "Safeguards Against Subversive Activities." These pamphlets are a pulse of professional patriotism. They report "red" activity broad enough to include Christian pacifists. They keep lists of red-baiting articles, books, lectures, mostly of the guttersnipe variety. They include, for instance, all the Hearst anti-Soviet series, but never a Walter Duranty. They list articles in *Liberty* and *True Detective Stories*. They wind up with a suggested legislative program for sedition bills, limiting the use of the mails, conditioning immigration and naturalization, and proposing a special Department of Justice agency to investigate subversive activities.

Otherwise the national chamber, busy with its legislative program, takes no hand in the direction of the locals, which, in accordance with local conditions and using local means, go the local lobbyists one better.

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Red Clay in Alabama

BY CARLETON BEALS

II. Another Tobacco Road

TOWARD the end of 1934 R. K. Greene, plantation owner and federal rehabilitation administrator in Alabama, boasted that 80 per cent of the farmers' federal debts had been paid—this in about six months' time! Shortly afterward he declared that not a single rehabilitation farmer in the whole state owed a dime. This was probably true, because those still in debt had been cleaned out, lock, stock, and barrel. Everything they possessed having been taken to liquidate their accounts, these unfortunate farmers were written off as "rehabilitated," and a new batch of human misery was fed into the mill. Such methods make the statistical record in Washington look better.

In any case the showing is truly remarkable. The gross cash income per family rarely exceeds $150 a year; most families see not one red cent of this. One share-cropper to whom I talked was worried because in six months he had not been able to pay off his grocery bill of nine cents! A study of conditions in Gorgas in northern Tuscaloosa County, made by Dr. V. M. Sims and an associate of the state university for the Tennessee Valley Authority, shows that in this more favored hill setting the average gross income for white tenant families is $144 and for Negroes $148. Conditions are much worse in the black belt, and the rehabilitation farmers, almost without exception, have got the worst lands—exhausted, eroded, stony acres which the landlords otherwise would find it difficult to rent. The federal rehabilitation farmer has had to work his head off for the little food credited to him at plantation stores—in amount and quality "scarcely wo'th the trouble to go an' tote it home"—and lives mostly on coarse unleavened corn bread and syrup. In return he has the doubtful privilege of coming to own an "ornery" steer and a plow, which in most cases, especially in Chambers County, he has had to turn back to the federal authorities or, the year following, to the landlord.

R. K. Greene has described the rehabilitation policy as that of "learning to crawl before you walk." Most of his clients are crawling with their bellies closer to the ground than ever. He boasts of his record in inducing successful belly-crawling. One glowing story tells how a noble Negro farmer with nineteen in his family made a success by hitching himself to the plow and having one of his boys drive him. Another canned story concerns a poverty-stricken "rehabilitation" farmer who survived the first year and as a result will be able to have an evening meal of hot biscuits and syrup, after which he will "contentedly munch goobers" (peanuts). Hot biscuits, if not especially good for children, are a slight improvement over unleavened corn bread. But there is something wrong when many "rehabilitation" farmers, though they produce a good crop and take outside work at every opportunity, face the winter with a few bushels of corn and little chance of employment.

At the beginning of 1935 George Hawkins (that is not his real name), a Negro share-cropper in Talapoosa County in the Alabama black belt, was one of five tenants on a hundred-acre tract rented by the federal Resettlement Administration from an absentee landlord and sublet in small patches at $50 a year each, three times the ordinary rent. The land, moreover, is the worst in the vicinity, full of ruts, stumps, and stones. Mr. Hawkins had to work hard indeed to put it in shape for planting. But if the land was bad and the rent high, he was to have the benefit of federal assistance.

No one had ever been concerned about the share-croppers before except the Share-Croppers' Union, and that had caused bloodshed. But now the family received $14 a month and had a ton of fertilizer, a sack of soda, a plow stock, and actually a mule instead of a steer. Hope was spreading its golden wings. Unfortunately the mule turned out to be "just ready to get home and die," which it did. Hawkins was then given a steer, too young to do much work.

Nor was an ordered budget easy to manage, because after two months the payments from the government were cut to $10; after six months they abruptly ceased but were as abruptly renewed for October and November. Yet after all, $108 was probably more real cash than Hawkins had ever received before in his life in any single year. Out of it, it is true, he had to buy gin certificates from speculators in order to sell his two bales of cotton. On the other hand he grew sixty bushels of corn, which, if not taken away, would permit the family of fourteen to have its customary two-meals-a-day diet of corn bread and syrup.

Drawing by Refrégier

The Hawkins family did not do so well, but the federal field foreman told them he wanted them to stay on another year. Then, out of a clear sky, Hawkins received from the landlord himself a notice to vacate. He found a very

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dilapidated shack where he could begin farming on shares. Momentarily he expected the federal authorities to "clean him out." Hawkins's neighbors said he was thrown off because he was suspected of belonging to the Share-Croppers' Union. The federal officials are bitter against the union. Fortunately, when he was finally evicted, he was generously provided with a temporary erosion job at $22 a month. Every day before dawn he has to walk eight miles in the mud and rain, and eight miles back in the dark. But fourteen mouths have to be fed. Hawkins doesn't feel very rehabilitated.

Henry Mason, a Negro World War veteran in poor health, was also paying the excessive rent of $50 for a little piece of the same gullied land. He worked through 1934 under the rehabilitation plan, then the government cleaned him up, taking his corn, plow lines, some fertilizer, fodder, so he would "get straight." He was told—and Greene also publicly stated—that his debt was cleared, though later it seemed there was still pending a charge of $54.

In 1935 Mason received some new supplies and $2.40 a week for his wife and five children. This continued for part of May and until the end of August, when they were "chopped off." They had received fertilizer, four "scooters," or plow-holds, an "old fifty-cent bridle," garden seed, ash potatoes, and every two weeks three to four cans of meat, "any ol' kin' of meat," but "not enough to walk after." They had also received an old mule, for which they were charged $60, but which "wuzn't wo'th $5." The federal field foreman promised that he would see they got a better one, but when an animal was most needed during plowing, he told them just "to scratch along." Since Mason couldn't work, his wife Callie, who was expecting a new baby, pushed the plow as deep as she could. The mule died in June. Callie didn't die because she is a strong woman and has magnificent courage.

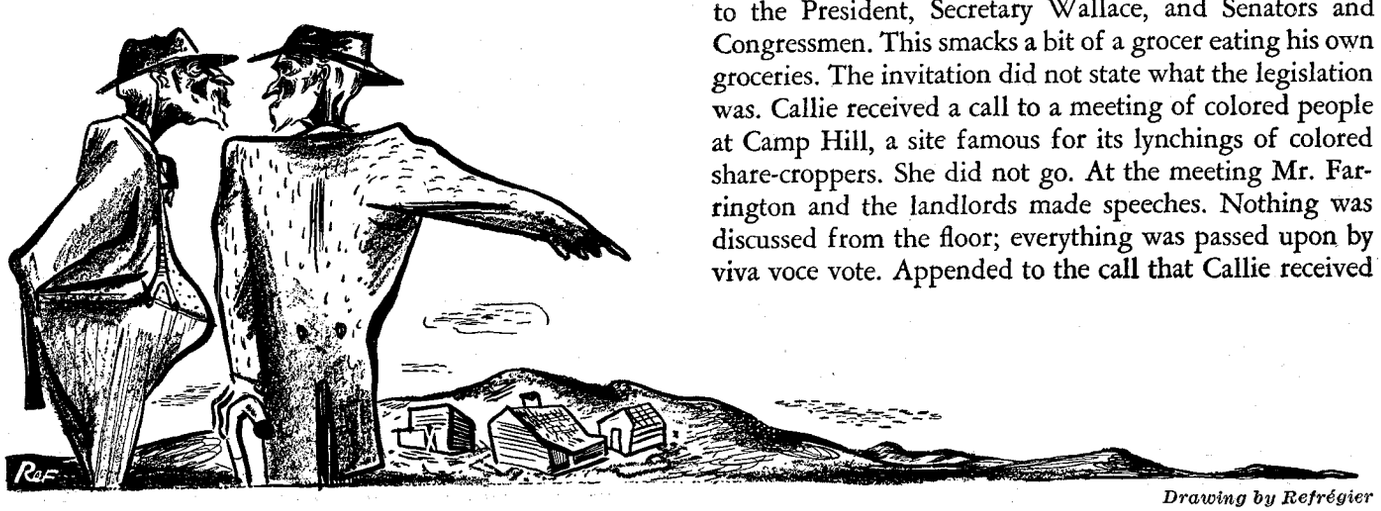
After a while Callie and her husband stopped getting their living checks. The county farm agent had asked them to indorse their checks over to Roy Patton, the field foreman, in payment for debts. When they refused, since they needed the money badly, they were simply informed that the checks had never come. Suspected of being members of the Share-Croppers' Union, Callie and her family were ordered to vacate in October. But Callie fought eviction so strenuously, declaring she had a right to stay on the place until the end of the year, that Patton was "afraid to come around" to see her. Thereupon the farm administrator for the absentee landlord ordered her off. Again she fought for her rights and stayed until January 1. The place was then turned over to Fred Harris, known to the Share-Croppers' Union as a stool pigeon.

Just before Callie was evicted, her husband was taken to the veterans' hospital near Tuskegee. Callie herself was offered work on the erosion project at $22. She refused, pointing out that she couldn't walk eight miles to work and back with a nursing baby to care for. Her new place stands in a puddle of red mud, and while she explained these things to me in a quiet but intense monotone, her baby lay on the edge of one of her two ancient beds on which the rain was beating through holes in the wall. Callie does not feel "rehabilitated" either, but she is as cheerful as she can be with her husband in the hospital and only a few bushels of corn on hand.

She had to move by herself on an icy day with the thermometer close to zero. That same day she received from F. N. Farrington, the federal county agent, with offices in Dadeville, a touching mimeographed circular. At the top was a picture of a sun rising over a hill and on either side were clusters of Christmas bells. It read:

> Ring out the Old . . . Ring in the New . . . Happy New Year . . . Howdy and Happy New Year to Yours. . . .
>
> This beautiful Christmas season has been made happier for us by the thoughts of the fine friendships we have enjoyed among the farm people of Tallapoosa County.

Mr. Farrington works hard to build up the landlords' organization, known as the Farm Bureau Federation. Since the Share-Croppers' Union came into being, the federation, amazingly enough, has made a drive for Negro members, and even pays their $2 initiation fee for them. In Lowndes County, right after the terrible lynchings of last year, it even held a joint meeting of blacks and whites, with a Negro speaker, a doctor from Tuskegee, who was asked to lead them in "Swing low, sweet chariot." However, usually in notices of the meetings of this organization the race is carefully designated. On January 23, 1936, Mr. Farrington sent out calls for meetings to discuss legislation pending in the national Congress and to send wires to the President, Secretary Wallace, and Senators and Congressmen. This smacks a bit of a grocer eating his own groceries. The invitation did not state what the legislation was. Callie received a call to a meeting of colored people at Camp Hill, a site famous for its lynchings of colored share-croppers. She did not go. At the meeting Mr. Farrington and the landlords made speeches. Nothing was discussed from the floor; everything was passed upon by viva voce vote. Appended to the call that Callie received



Drawing by Refrégier

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was one of Mr. Farrington's touching sentiments: "Usually after the darkest cloud the sun shines brightest, but sometimes the cloud lingers too long." Typical of Farrington's meetings was one at which the farm-measurement committee was chosen to determine the acreages for cotton-crop production. The farmers and share-croppers were presented with the names of four leading plantation owners, which were railroaded through.

Similar set-ups exist in all the black-belt counties. The pattern, with minor variations, is as follows: the landlords control the acreage allotments; the reduced acreage they have granted themselves is often far greater than any amount they ever cultivated. On the other hand, the acreage of the poor farmers and croppers has been cut to the bone. Naturally the landlords then have more tax-free federal gin certificates than they need; the poor folk do not have enough for a crop which will permit them to survive. Often the landlord has kept even the gin certificates allotted by the government for the cropper's mimimum. The croppers must then go to the larger landlords and buy, for from three to six cents a pound of cotton, certificates which have cost the possessor nothing. Thus the planter often makes as much as eighteen cents on part of his cotton, the cropper only six cents.

The landlord has other advantages. The government has been giving a rental check of three and one-half cents per pound of lint cotton for the 40 per cent of production curtailed. These allotment checks went out at picking and selling times, and theoretically made it possible for the cropper to survive without exceeding his allotted acreage. At first the allotment checks were taken by the landlords; later when the checks were made out directly to the cropper, the landlord either forced him to indorse them over or simply forged his name. The government, of course, guaranteed twelve-cent cotton, and sent out parity checks for any difference. These checks went the same route as the rental checks—into the landlord's pocket.

Furthermore, the marketing of cotton is a white privilege and a landlord's privilege. The cropper has no say over the disposition of his crop, and only in recent years has he even dared be on hand to check up on the weighing of it. He has no means of knowing exactly when his cotton is sold, and he is charged fifty cents a month per bale for storage. The cropper rarely sees any cash, because the food and supplies he has been furnished at a 20 per cent interest charge usually eat up every cent.

With this arbitrary set-up the cropper has no chance to succeed. The land itself is nearly exhausted, eroded, and worthless. Still greater disaster for the cotton industry looms ahead so far as the black belt of Alabama is concerned. Even with the fairest economic set-up, even if the croppers received the full product of their labor, they could scarcely make more than a starvation living. The tragedy is that the federal government in its rehabilitation program has adhered to all the old vicious landlord practices, and has in fact strengthened them.

[*This is the last of Mr. Beals's two articles on "rehabilitation" in Alabama.*]

Hitler's Totalitarian Theater

BY LILIAN T. MOWRER

WHEN the National Socialists came into power in January, 1933, the German theater was the liveliest in Europe. For more than a century the reigning monarchs had subsidized playhouses and encouraged native and foreign plays, players, and music. Then came fourteen years of republican rule, during which state and municipal support replaced court patronage. During this period a bold experiment in popular art was undertaken in the creation of the People's Theater. This association, with its own theater in Berlin and affiliations and touring companies throughout the country, provided its half-million members with good drama and music for the trifling price of from one mark to two marks fifty a performance.

The Nazis were not interested in the theater for artistic experimentation, but recognized its possibilities as a megaphone for their ideas, and immediately set about to destroy in it everything connected with the hated republic. Not only Jews but Social Democrats, intellectuals, radicals, "Kultur-Bolshevists," and of course all personal enemies were thrown out. Everyone who had contributed to the brilliance of the former regime was banned, not only actors and directors, but all the playwrights from Hauptmann to Hasenclever. It was a clean sweep in the world of art, and soon the stage was deluged with political tracts written by hitherto unknown young men. Goebbels's play "Michael," an amateurish bit of spite which had been refused by countless managers, was put on at twenty-six different theaters.

By the end of 1933, in spite of favored box-office treatment to Brown Shirts, the theaters were half empty. The Propaganda Minister was quick to realize the criticism of Nazi culture that this implied and the unfavorable conclusions that people would draw. He set about not to repair the damage but to cover up the traces. The Theater Act, passed in May, 1934, gave him the necessary power. He dissolved the three existing actors' and managers' unions and confiscated their funds. "Syndical chambers" for the professions of acting, playwriting, stage design and direction, music, and so on were formed under leaders who were legally bound to carry out their task "in the spirit of national responsibility." This obligation means that a record of party activity is more important than artistic or technical ability. The entire personnel of

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each chamber is governed by the *Führer Prinzip,* blind obedience to a leader. The leader may be a storm trooper, former doorkeeper, or one of the "old gang" whom the Nazis wished to reward—or even a man competent at his job. But the theater audiences did not grow any larger. Subsidies to state theaters were doubled and tripled: private backers who had been rash enough to finance productions were "helped" in order to keep up appearances.

"The theater is no welfare institution," warned Minister Göring at the reopening of the Prussian State Playhouse, which has been very much enlarged and handsomely decorated with red silk brocade. "It is no place for niggling critics, and we will tolerate no dishwater internationalism"—which in Nazi diction means anything foreign or liberal. "As long as there exists in Germany any unpolitical, neutral, or individualistic art our task is not ended," declared the *Völkischer Beobachter,* Hitler's own sheet. So the Nazi aims are quite definite. But the results are nil. Not a single playwright of worth has emerged to put their ideas into dramatic form.

The handful of writers turning out new pieces are quite inadequate to the task of keeping the German stage supplied, although Goebbels offers prizes for plays, and Göring simply commissions them. Richard Billinger, a man of sixty, born of Austrian peasants, was hailed at first as the "poet of the New Age." His contact with the soil was to provide all those mystic qualities of *Blut und Boden* which were to regenerate German art under the Nazis. He has written three or four episodic sketches, not without a vague lyrical beauty, full of local color which skilful direction can turn into effective stage pictures. There have been some heavy back-to-the-soil dramas like "Mensch, Aus Erde Gemacht," by Friedrich Griese, of great brutality unrelieved by any poetry. The necessity of avoiding "dangerous" subjects has led to an outcrop of historical plays, little more than facile journalism. So much suppression is exercised that creative work has ceased.

When I visited Berlin during the past winter I found all the theaters full and hardly a Brown Shirt visible. The government is spending immense sums on building and decorating; there is a second state playhouse and a new popular opera house. To judge by appearances, everything is booming, and I wondered why, for the playbills offer no explanation. At the Grosses Schauspielhaus and at the once famous Volksbühne were two faded operettas from the early nineties. There were four plays by Shakespeare, including Hans Rothe's very freely translated "Two Gentlemen of Verona," which is delightfully produced but marred by two much buffoonery. At the Kurfürstendamm Theater a repertory of Ibsen, Grillparzer, Goethe, and Calderon was being played in the manner of Victorian melodrama. A popular actress had revived Sardou's "Madame Sans Gêne." I went to the première of "Thomas Paine," by Hanns Johst, marveling that this champion of the Rights of Man should figure on a Nazi stage. But the humanitarian Paine fades before the patriot who dared the Americans to fling off England's yoke. Paine is the "drummer" of the United States, just as Hitler (see "Mein Kampf") prides himself on being the drummer of the Third Reich. A brilliant production by Jurgen Fehling could not disguise the crude philosophy of this thin little play.

In all Berlin only four theaters remain in private hands, and their future is problematic. All the rest are on the dole. For although they are full they do not pay. Goebbels has organized the public as ruthlessly as he has critics and actors, but it is an expensive business. To fill the theaters he founded three *Gemeinschäfte,* or leagues. Membership in the Culture League is open to all non-Masonic Aryans who pay one mark annually (unemployed twenty pfennigs) and pledge themselves to attend ten plays during the season. In return they get seats at half the box-office price. (The average cost of the best seats is nine marks.) They cannot choose their plays or the nights they visit the theater, but at least joining the league is not obligatory. The Workers' League and the famous *Kraft Durch Freude* Association circulate theater tickets throughout all shops, factories, and offices at prices varying from seventy-five pfennigs to one mark fifty. If these are not taken voluntarily they are simply charged up to recalcitrants, and the sum is deducted from their week's wages.

Two innovations in the German theater may be credited to the Nazis. Since Jews are not allowed to participate in any German cultural activity, they have founded their own cultural leagues and have theaters of their own in Hamburg, Frankfurt-am-Main, Gleiwitz, and Breslau. There is one in the east end of Berlin which many cultivated Jews refuse to visit as they consider it "ghetto." Hebbel's "Judith" has been given here, and friends tell me that the musical shows are distinctly good. It is strictly forbidden for any Aryan to attend a performance without very special permission from the Minister of Propaganda, and I had no time to apply for this.

Another more intentional Nazi contribution is the *Thingspiele* political mystery plays for the open-air theaters—*Thingplätze*—of which sixty are planned and twelve actually built. Summer festivals are held in them, and a rather hysterical self-glorification is celebrated with singing, marching, and flag-waving. One of the earliest of these mysteries, Richard Euringer's "German Passion, 1933," is a symbolic representation of Hitler as the Messiah; Kurt Heynicke's "Way into the Kingdom" is a loosely thought-out emotional approach to National Socialism; the "Eternal German Destiny" grapples with the "mythos" of the Nordic race. There are dozens of these tribal plays, and a certain amount of technical skill is shown in their staging (the Nazis have never lacked showmen). Their weakness lies in their simplification of ideas and vague sentimentality. The authors do not seem to realize that this emotional propaganda might equally well serve any political system. But the masses who are swept into the arenas to witness these exhibitions are usually extremely young and willing to believe almost anything.

For in spite of exhortations and commands that the theater serve the people as a political rostrum, its function in the Third Reich becomes daily more apparent. It is a vast social device for absorbing just so many workers who would otherwise be unemployed, and just so many spectators who might otherwise spend their spare time thinking of other days. From this point of view it functions well.

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"Soaking the Rich"

BY GEORGE TERBORGH

THE inequality in the distribution of wealth and income in modern industrial countries provides a perennial theme for the prophets of discontent. This is not surprising when we consider the spectacular character of the statistics on this subject. In predepression America, for example (later estimates are not available), the richest 1 per cent of the population enjoyed as much income as the poorest 60 per cent and owned more wealth than the poorest 90 per cent.

Proposals to rectify these inequalities by abolishing private ownership of the means of production have at no time gained any great following in this country—even during the recent depression, when widespread distress and destitution created a favorable background for revolutionary propaganda. The proposals which have made real headway are, in appearance at least, less radical. They assume the continuance of private capitalism and rely on a further extension of an ancient and familiar device—taxation.

"Soaking the rich" may be of recent currency as a slogan, but as a fiscal practice it has long been well established. It began when the principle of "progressive" taxation was first applied. The departure from the rule of uniform tax rates for rich and poor opened the door to a gradual but persistent evolution in the direction of increasing the relative burden on the rich. While this evolution has thus far stopped short of the kind of "share-the-wealth" taxes sponsored by Huey Long, it is well advanced in the field of income, gift, and inheritance levies. Today the question is no longer whether the rich shall be "soaked," but merely how far the process shall be carried.

From the ethical standpoint the principle of progressive taxation has developed but one important rationalization. This is the claim that such taxation adjusts the burden to the "ability" of the taxpayer to pay. Thus, for example, Mr. Jones, with $100,000 a year, is supposed to be able to pay more than one hundred times the tax of Mr. Smith, whose income is $1,000.

The formula "taxation according to ability" is thought to provide a rule by which a fair and proper distribution of burdens may be made among incomes or estates of various sizes. Popular belief to the contrary, it does nothing of the kind. Who can say what tax rates equalize the burden for two incomes, one of which is one hundred times as large as the other? It is argued by one school of thought that the burden is equalized when the tax absorbs the same percentage of both incomes, and by another that it is equalized when the incomes remaining after the payment of the tax are themselves equal. Between these views is an area as wide as the sea, without chart or beacon. In practice, tax rates are fixed by the play of political forces, not by formula. The claim that a particular schedule, once arrived at, adapts the burden to the ability to pay must be put down as an effort to dignify a practical compromise by giving it an appearance of scientific precision.

What is really involved in soak-the-rich taxes is a conflict between different social groups. The fundamental ethical question is which of these interests should be favored. Someone has to provide the revenues of government: should it be the rich or the poor? The answer to this question depends largely on the social philosophy and sympathies of those who are doing the talking.

The classic economic argument in behalf of inequality in the distribution of wealth and income runs somewhat as follows. People in modest circumstances ordinarily spend the bulk of their incomes for current consumption, with a negligible amount of saving for outside investment. People of wealth, on the other hand, if for no other reason than that they have more than they can conveniently spend for consumption, save a large fraction of their incomes. In a highly mechanized and dynamic economy such as ours the optimum progress in production calls for a large and steady stream of investment funds for embodiment in new capital goods. If the national income were distributed with any approach to equality there would not be enough saving to supply these funds; hence material progress would be slowed down, and in the long run even the immediate beneficiaries of the redistribution would be worse off than they would have been if the incomes of the rich had been left undisturbed.

A recent study by the Brookings Institution indicates that as a whole families receiving less than $1,250 a year save virtually nothing, while those receiving $100,000 and over save more than half of their income. It is estimated that, in 1929, 67 per cent of the total family savings was accumulated by less than 2.3 per cent of all families at the top of the income scale, families whose incomes aggregated but 28 per cent of the total family income. There is no doubt, therefore, that anything which served to divert income from the top to the bottom of the scale would drastically reduce the proportion devoted to investment and increase the share going to current consumption.

This much one may concede without assenting to the proposition that any and every step toward income equalization through taxation is a blow to progress. It is by no means certain that it is always desirable to have the largest volume of saving attainable; indeed, there is a large and respectable body of opinion in support of the view that, despite the extensive use of progressive taxation characteristic of modern fiscal practice, the volume of saving has at times been excessive and has led to maladjustments in the economy which have retarded progress. The truth is that we do not know within wide limits what rate of saving represents the economic optimum in the long run, and

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since we have no clear criteria on this point we do not know how far soak-the-rich taxes can be carried without an undue curtailment of saving. It seems very probable, however, that unless some alternative source of savings should be developed, these taxes would have to stop far short of equalizing wealth or income throughout the nation. A very substantial degree of inequality appears on this ground to be economically useful, if not necessary.

While this time-honored arrangement certainly works, after a fashion, it cannot be considered, from the social standpoint, a highly economical method of obtaining a supply of savings. The price paid is measured by the amount of income which the rich dissipate in consumption before they begin to save. The Brookings Institution has estimated that in 1929 the "wealthy and well-to-do," comprising but 2.4 per cent of the population, accounted for about 20 per cent of the total national consumption. They consumed more, in fact, than the poorest 40 per cent of the population. What is equally to the point, they consumed more in the aggregate than they saved. It is quite evident that the cost to society of the savings secured through the maintenance of inequality is a heavy one.

There is another common economic argument against heavy taxes on the rich, namely, that these "destroy initiative." The first question this raises is whose initiative is destroyed—the initiative of those who are hoping to become rich or those who are already rich?

Even a very broad classification of the rich and well-to-do embraces only about 2 per cent of the population. The effect of soak-the-rich taxes on the initiative of the other 98 per cent may be considered negligible. Most of the individuals in the larger group are far below the lower limits of even the well-to-do category. It is more than doubtful if their acquisitive efforts would be seriously restrained by the knowledge that if and when they became wealthy they would have to pay higher taxes.

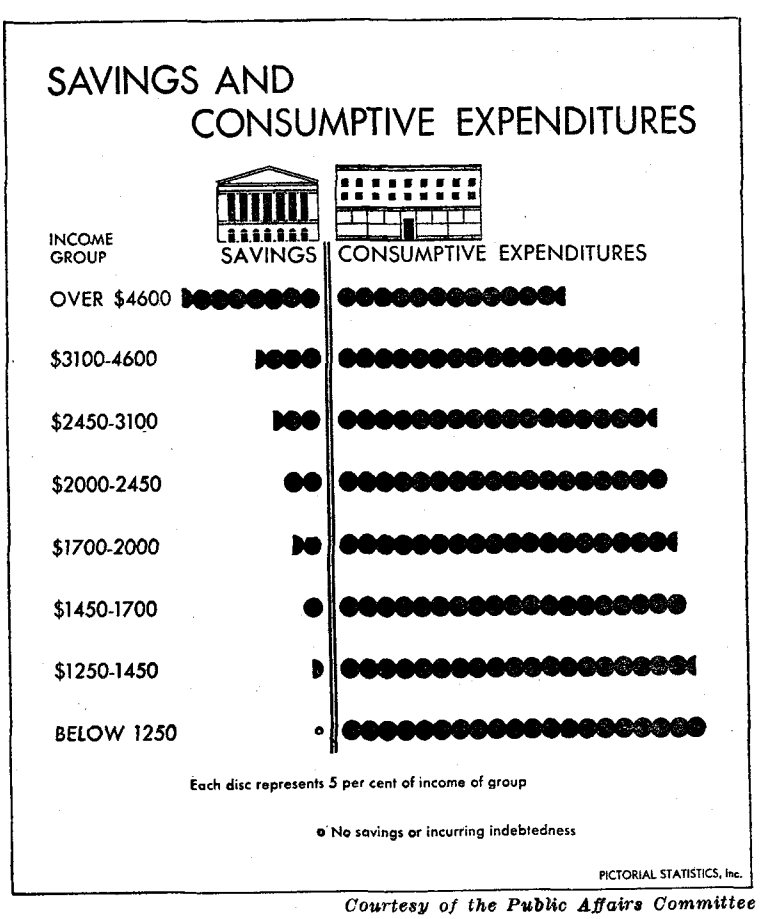
In this 98 per cent are found the owners of most of the nation's unincorporated business enterprises, the bulk of which consists of farms and retail trade establishments. These people would still be free to exercise their talents and enterprise to their hearts' content. The rest of the business enterprise of the country is in the hands of corporations. If heavy taxation of the rich and well-to-do has a seriously restraining influence on business initiative, it must be because it impairs the exercise of that quality by corporate enterprise.

It cannot be denied that there are many corporations, of which the Ford Motor Company is the outstanding example, whose activities are largely the reflection of the initiative of a wealthy individual owner. There are others, like the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, whose operations are quite independent of the fortunes and the efforts of the proprietors. It is only where wealthy stockholders are actively concerned with the management and control of corporate policies that soak-the-rich taxes could conceivably "destroy initiative" for the corporation as a whole. For a large proportion of the nation's corporate enterprise this effect would probably be negligible.

While a tax on the income from labor can be escaped by idleness, a tax on the income from property—if comprehensive and adequately enforced—can be escaped only by ceasing to own property. By far the largest component in the incomes of the rich consists of the return from ownership. It makes, for example, more than 75 per cent of the aggregate income of those receiving $50,000 and over annually. A great many rich individuals exercise no business initiative whatever beyond that involved in receiving interest, dividends, and the like. This form of initiative will continue as long as taxes leave anything to be received.

It is sometimes argued that heavy taxation will lead the rich to withhold their funds from investment in risky undertakings, from industrial pioneering, and to place them in government bonds and similar conservative commitments. This would be true if the latter enjoyed a partial or complete tax exemption, as government bonds unfortunately now do, but if the rates were the same on property income from all sources there would be no reason for the shift.

The social-security legislation, perhaps quite accidentally, constitutes a small first step in relieving society from its dependence on the rich for the function of saving. Whether the future will see other governmental action for the promotion of compulsory saving can only be conjectured. If carried farther, such developments might make possible a far heavier taxation of the rich and a greater equalization of wealth and income than are now advisable.



Courtesy of the Public Affairs Committee

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The Consumer Front

BY RUTH BRINDZE

THERE is a two-minute scene in "Triple A Plowed Under," the first edition of the Federal Theater Project's Living Newspaper, which for effectiveness of presentation is head and shoulders above the second interim report of the Federal Trade Commission on the milk monopoly. At the desk sits the middleman, a humanized robot who controls the producer on one hand and the consumer on the other by repeating the simple rule of the monopolist, "Take it or leave it." They both take it: the producer takes three cents for a quart of milk which the consumer takes for fifteen cents.

The FTC report supplies explanatory details on the operation of the milk monopoly and shows how the milk trust maintains profits at the expense of producers and consumers. So far only the findings about the Pennsylvania and Connecticut milksheds have been published, but since the two all-powerful holding companies, the National Dairy Products Corporation and the Borden Company, control the milk supply in other parts of the country as well, the reports are a fair enough sample of what the final conclusions will be. Competition in the retail field has been largely eliminated by the simple expedient of buying out competitors and paying them with holding-company stock. The outward semblance of competition is, of course, maintained, even though this necessitates the continuation of the uneconomical system of sending half a dozen milk wagons along the same route, all delivering the same quality of milk at the same price. For the Connecticut companies delivery expense increased from 17.5 per cent of net sales in 1931 to 20.3 per cent in 1933. The Philadelphia companies checked off 21.4 per cent of net sales for delivery expenses in 1934. In both milksheds operating and administrative expenses steadily increased throughout the depression. But despite the high cost of doing business and the decrease in milk consumption, the dealers continued to make a handsome profit, the average for the Connecticut dealers being 14.14 per cent and for the Philadelphia companies 21 to 28 per cent.

Producers made even heavier contributions than consumers to the business success of the distributors. The companies collected these involuntary contributions from the producers by paying them the low "surplus" prices for millions of gallons sold by the distributors as fluid milk, by overcharging them for hauling the milk from the country receiving stations to the city processing plants, and by making them foot the bills for laboratory and field work done by employees of the distributors. The profits that accrue from these and other transactions are not necessarily reflected in the books of the milk distributors, for by complex intercompany sales the profits and losses of units of the operating companies are successfully hidden.

In addition to demonstrating the monopoly's control of price, the commission's investigators uncovered some particularly shabby tricks that had been played on the consumer. There was, for example, the postdating of caps on milk bottles. One of the offenders, it was alleged, was a producer of certified milk under contract to Scott-Powell Dairies of Philadelphia. The commission developed evidence that an official of the dairy had given instructions to date milk a day ahead.

The reported testimony of Milton T. George, formerly a Grade A producer for Supplee-Wills Jones, indicates that the chief difference between Grade A and Grade B milk may be the letter on the label. At the Red Hill station to which he delivered there was only one tank. All milk, without regard to the bacteria content, was dumped into it.

THERE has been a decided swing on the part of consumer groups from complete absorption in price and quality of goods to a concern for fair standards for labor. The contention that our luxuriously appointed emporiums are glorified sweatshops is now substantiated in the Robert committee report, recently sent to the President.

In its study of wage and hour changes in industry since the invalidation of the NRA, the Robert report lists the retail industry as among the five worst offenders. But this report, according to the refreshingly frank comments of the trade press, does not show how bad conditions actually are, since it was based on conditions existing before Labor Day, when winter schedules were not yet in effect. The United States Department of Labor states that for January of this year "average hours worked by employees in retail trade were 3.8 per cent higher than for the same month a year ago . . . average hourly earnings were 0.9 per cent lower." In commenting on this statement the trade journal *Retailing* says: "That so much pressure should have been exerted on wage and hour standards during 1935, the year in which retail trade generally showed a gain of 14 per cent and department stores 5 per cent, constitutes a general comment on the trade. . . . Is the present trend toward sweatshop conditions to be allowed to continue to the point where some outside authority will be forced to step in?"

The speed-up and the stretch-out have now been successfully applied to retail selling. The personnel managers' orders are to cut staffs and to increase the sales per day for each sales clerk. This system is condemned when it is practiced in the textile-manufacturing industries; if it is permitted to gain a strong foothold in retailing, it will be directly the fault of consumers, individually and as an organized group. This is the time for consumers who object to sweatshops to test the honest intentions of retailers who so persistently and so monotonously have repeated that the customer is always right.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

IT SEEMS to me that President Holt of Rollins College rather let his enthusiasm run away with him when he referred to Eleanor Roosevelt as the "first woman citizen of America." Isn't this a case where comparisons are extremely difficult, not to say odious? I am one of those who admire Mrs. Roosevelt not a little, who believe in her right to carry on her work and live her own life although a resident of the White House. I am grateful to her for breaking the tradition that the President's wife must always sit in the Executive Mansion and devote herself to giving tea and food to the diplomatic corps, army and navy officers, high civilian officials, and the hundreds of strays, foreign and American, who are entertained at the White House in the course of the year. She has rendered a great service to the nation by the simplicity and independence of her life, her refusal to put on airs as the "first lady of the land"—a revolting designation utterly out of place in a democracy, for which the snobbishness of our dailies is wholly to blame. Mrs. Roosevelt's refusal to be accompanied by a Secret Service man, her rebuke to the New York City police when they sought to assign to her a uniformed man who would have deprived her of all privacy and made her conspicuous, her insistence that the wife of the President should behave and be treated like other American women have been a real contribution to our political life. The average person does not realize how strong the tendency has been in Washington in the last twenty-five years to surround the occupants of the White House with the attributes of royalty. Hence it is a valuable precedent that Mrs. Roosevelt is setting when she travels in taxis or occupies an ordinary lower berth in trains.

Everybody ought to be grateful that we have in the White House a woman who thinks for herself, who has vision, and who is well aware that this country is not in a happy condition and needs a radical overhauling. I especially admire her serenity in carrying on her work as she sees fit despite the malicious gossip relating to herself and her husband, deliberately set afoot by the rich and prosperous who are so bitter against the New Deal and its author, even to the extent of believing, incredible as it sounds, that the President is a regularly enrolled member of the Communist Party. Because of Mrs. Roosevelt's sympathy for so many good causes, I am quite willing to overlook the banality and the intellectual poverty of her diary, now syndicated in many dailies, and to put aside my feeling of regret that she makes as many speeches as she does and talks so frequently over the radio, even if the latter is for charity. These regrets are impersonal—by which I mean that no one can write as much and talk as often as Eleanor Roosevelt and not run pretty thin. They do not counterbalance the usefulness of her example in the ways that I have already cited. She is of course bound to support her husband's policies and is indubitably limited by her relationship to him. I cannot but believe that if she were a free agent she would give us some extremely effective criticism of the whole vacillating and dangerous handling of the relief problem. I think she might also have something cogent to say about the failure of the housing program and other errors of the Administration.

But all this does not make her the feminine leader of the United States, and I am sure that she would be the first to say so. Who is the leading woman of the United States? To my mind there is none. Jane Addams merited that title. She left no successor. No other American woman today typifies in herself such glorious achievement or has made herself an international figure of Miss Addams's stature. Certainly Mrs. Roosevelt has failed to take Miss Addams's noble and uncompromising stand on peace—the greatest question before humanity today. Judging by some of her utterances, Eleanor Roosevelt has fallen for the old, stupid argument that because other countries have large armies and navies we must have them, too, without stopping to analyze just what that means. But waiving that, we have a number of distinguished women besides Mrs. Roosevelt. They are great in their respective fields, yet somehow I cannot think of one who really merits the designation of the first woman citizen of the United States.

The rest of this page I wish to devote to Theodor Wolff's remarkable new book "The Eve of 1914." I know that many people are fed up with the World War and what caused it. They do not wish to read anything further about it; indeed, more and more persons are so heartsick over the world today that they want to forget all about it and no longer even care to peruse the reports of Hitler's aggressions or of the dissensions and lack of a vigorous program among the former Allies. Still I feel that I must mention this great historical contribution of the man who was the foremost editor in Germany during and after the war. There should certainly be a clearer understanding of the machinations and intrigues which led the world into its present impasse. I do not mean that one must accept Wolff's interpretations as final truths. But here is one who was a key man in Germany, who risked a great deal by his outspoken criticism of his own government during the war. Now he is a victim of the horrible misgovernment of Germany for which the Allies and we ourselves are responsible. It seems to me that if any of us still wish to try to prevent a final disaster, we should profit by the present judgments of Theodor Wolff. Particularly enlightening are his conversations with Bethmann-Hollweg. But the whole book is a historical document of lasting worth.

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BROUN'S PAGE

IT HAS always been my contention that virtue can best be maintained when access to vice is kept fairly open. We speak sternly of believing in liberty not license as if the latter mode of existence had been widely tried and found wanting. Frankly I am not prepared to say that life under license would be both beautiful and enjoyable, for I have never had a complete shot at any such dispensation. Who has? Even those cities which boast of being wide open set restrictions somewhere along the line and interfere with the wholly lawless state.

Henry Mencken used to speak with pride of the "free state of Maryland" and intimate that Baltimore was the logical successor to Gomorrah. But those were empty boasts. Recent years have exposed Mr. Mencken as a respectable burgher, and he meant no more than that it was possible to procure bootleg beer in the city of his choice. But that hardly set Baltimore apart among the metropolises of the nation. In my dream of an almost perfect United States I have thought of the establishment of regional cities of sin. The districts used by the Federal Reserve system might suit the purpose in the main. These selected spots would be beyond and above the law. Quite possibly we shall yet return to prohibition on account of the manifest evils of alcohol. But no restrictive legislation would be binding in the cities of sin. Naturally gambling and all behavior held to be immoral would be permitted in these special havens.

My aim, of course, is to promote morality. In other words, I believe in liberty not license. Or, to be more precise, I think license might be fine if we were all developed somewhat beyond our present natural timidity. The cities of sin would serve to keep the great majority of us in the straight and narrow path because we should know that escape from our chosen routine was always possible. The average man might say to himself, "I will abide by righteousness and good conduct for another year and then I'll get a round-trip ticket to the nearest C. of S. and cut loose for a fortnight."

But when the year ended, the expedition could go over for another six months. Human nature leans to procrastination, and even the sinners are inclined to say, "Next week will do. Depravity can wait." According to my theory men and women under this dispensation would live and die without fault simply because they never took advantage of their opportunities. They went along quite cheerfully in rectitude because high jinks were always just around the corner.

The city where I am now spending the last few days of my vacation has made a rather gallant try in the right direction. At its best Miami, Florida, is as wild as any mining camp and much more luxurious. Unfortunately the city possesses what is known as a "better element." My luck is so bad that I generally arrive just after the better element has come into power. Slaving away at various tasks in New York mid ice and snow each spring and winter, I read the newspapers and learn that the weather is clear and warm in Miami and that all the vicious gambling resorts are running wide open. A week later I put my affairs in order and show up in the city of sin prepared to relax and get the roses back into my cheeks. After a pleasant dinner I cash a check and inquire at the desk as to where I may go and lose my money. The clerk shakes his head dubiously. "Everything is closed, Mr. B," he says. "There's a reform wave on and all gambling has been outlawed."

"But," I object, "I read that this city was wide open all through the season."

"And so it was," explains the Miamian. "But now the season is over and the law-and-order crowd have stepped in."

I wish Miami would make up its mind whether it intends to be another Zion or a new Babylon. It annoys me to arrive invariably upon the up-wave of reform, and I want it distinctly understood that these sackcloth interludes are no part of my doing.

In all fairness to the resort which proclaims that it is "America's playground" I must report that puritanism has not won the citadel utterly. During the afternoon it is possible to bet upon the horses, and at night the greyhounds run. But at the stroke of midnight Miami becomes completely a city of law and order. Or is somebody fooling me? Again it is a town of strict Sabbath enforcement. The dogs and the horses go into retirement until the Lord's Day has ended. There is nothing to do but listen to sermons or try to catch sailfish. And both are tedious sports.

Still something should be said in compliment to the clergy of Miami. The Florida metropolis contains more churches than any city of its size in the entire nation. And yet the preachers give a surprisingly small amount of trouble. While the season is on they are never under foot. All their sermons against gambling are delivered in summer when there isn't any. During the good months of the year the men of the cloth content themselves with thundering at the Moabites and the Philistines. The children of darkness and the children of light lie down together much as the lions and lambs of the millennium. The men who run the gambling resorts even go to the length of paying for "Go to church on Sunday" advertisements. Miami at its best has a complete economic unity.

It is even possible that this town might hold its proper place as a city of sin throughout the year it if were not for local pride. Nobody here gets annoyed at Florida racketeers. Home-town talent is accorded free rein at all times. Unfortunately every once and so often gangsters from New York come down and shoot local boys who are making good. Miami resents that. It is still pretty parochial. But after all, one should be patient with a growing community. Even if Miami isn't the perfect city of sin it makes a perfectly elegant try.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

"WINTERSET"—CRITICS' PRIZE-WINNER

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THE Dramatic Critics' Circle, composed of seventeen metropolitan critics including *The Nation's,* gave its prize for the best play of the season by an American author to Maxwell Anderson's "Winterset." This is the first annual award; it was made with only three dissenting votes; and it augurs well for the future significance of the prize.

I happen to have concurred in the majority opinion, but nearly all who are familiar with the tragedy, either through the performance or the printed version, will probably agree that it is, at least, an easily defensible choice. Obviously, the selection was not, as too many of the Pulitzer Prize selections appear to have been, the result of a compromise upon some inoffensive mediocrity agreed upon as a last resort. The play has character; its virtues and defects are positive; and no one could well remain merely indifferent to so unusual and so passionate an appeal to deep emotions.

The official announcement of the award reads in part as follows:

> The Circle's decision is based upon the conviction that in "Winterset" the author accomplished the notably difficult task of interpreting a valid and challenging contemporary theme dealing with the pursuit of human justice in terms of unusual poetic force, realizing a drama of rich meaning and combining high literary distinction with compelling theatrical force.

Speaking only for myself, I should like to particularize somewhat further and to say that there are at least two reasons why I believe "Winterset" a play of more than usual significance.

To begin with, it is verse drama of a very special kind. I do not mean to assume that a play in verse, even a commercially successful play in verse, would necessarily be noteworthy merely because it was at once "poetic" and successful. Mr. Anderson himself has written "poetic drama" before now, and despite the popularity of his "Mary of Scotland" I could never feel that that play, as a play, was more than respectable. Indeed, the very fact that its author, who had collaborated in "What Price Glory?" and independently written at least one excellent comedy, turned to a historical subject when he wished to write a play in verse was distinctly dispiriting. It seemed to confirm the almost universal if tacit assumption that only the past can be conceived in poetic terms, that the poetic drama has ceased to exist, not because we have left poetry, but because poetry has left us—because modern life and our conception of it are radically unsuited to that degree of elevation which makes verse a natural medium of sincere expression. To a considerable degree at least, "Mary of Scotland" partook of the nature of a pastiche, and a pastiche is not merely the opposite of a work of art. It also usually amounts to a confession on the part of its maker that he was compelled to use fragments of other men's art because he found it impossible to transmute his experience into art of his own creation.

"Winterset," on the other hand, is a contemporary theme treated in connection with contemporary life. The important fact is not that its language is metered. Furthermore, when one stresses the fact that the scene is contemporary, one does not, of course, mean to assume that only in connection with contemporary events can anything significant be said. But verse is an outward sign that the author proposes to reach a certain degree of elevation. And the choice of the contemporary scene is an outward sign that he proposes to attack in the directest possible manner the problem of demonstrating that the life of today affords themes inviting treatment in the poetic form. The measure of his success is just the fact that the impressiveness of the drama is nowhere diminished by any sense on the spectator's part that the matter and manner are radically incongruous.

"Winterset" exhibits most of the usual technical characteristics of the poetic drama. Its personages not only speak verse but are endowed with that supernormal power of expression which sacrifices realistic representation to completeness of communication. The meanest of them takes on a dignity which belongs to him not as a person but as a necessary participant in an action the sum total of which is grand in its implications. The most important are capable of philosophic reflections which, as individuals, they would never be competent to formulate but which are permitted them by virtue of a convention endowing the chief figures in poetic drama with the power to understand the significance of their own character and actions. Yet to anyone not unduly disturbed by the mere unfamiliarity of such a play the fact that twentieth-century persons should speak in the form and manner of poetry soon becomes as readily acceptable as the fact that a twelfth-century Danish prince or a fourteen-year-old Italian girl of the Renaissance should do so. To say all this is not to say that "Winterset" is perfect or everywhere completely realized. For example, the deaths which constitute the catastrophe seem annoyingly fortuitous. But it does indicate why it demonstrates more successfully than any other American play that the poetic drama is not dead beyond hope of resurrection.

The second great virtue of "Winterset" lies in its illustration of the manner in which a "socially significant" theme may be treated in genuinely dramatic and genuinely

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poetic fashion. Obviously the situation was suggested by the Sacco-Vanzetti trial, but Mr. Anderson has realized that the attempt to use such a subject in imaginative literature is justifiable only if imaginative literature can produce an effect or reach a depth of understanding beyond the scope of the essay, the speech, or the polemic. There is no excuse for saying in the dramatic form what can be said in a simpler manner, and Mr. Anderson has justified himself, first, by his brilliant generalization of the subject and, secondly, by the success with which he has explored its deepest implications—the question of the nature of justice and the question of the effect upon various human beings of their success or failure in the search for it. By dealing not with the event itself but with the reverberations of that event in after years, he sacrificed journalistic immediacy but gained to an immeasurable degree in emotional and philosophic richness.

As I am not unaware, many persons would maintain the superior *usefulness* of the previous play on the same subject which he wrote with Harold Hickerson, and it is true, perhaps, that he would never have written "Winterset" at all had it not been for the social indignation which found direct expression in "Gods of the Lightning." But that play merely said what had been said with equal effectiveness in journalistic terms dozens of times before, and the most useful play is the play which contributes to the intellectual or emotional understanding of a subject something which only a playwright can contribute. Looking back to the review which I wrote when "Winterset" was first produced, I find myself remarking that if "Gods of the Lightning" represents what, as a citizen, Mr. Anderson had to say about Sacco and Vanzetti, then "Winterset" represents what, as poet and playwright, he had further to say upon the same subject. The distinction, I still think, is significant. And the artist serves society best when he serves it in ways of which only the artist is capable.

BOOKS

The Mainsprings of Capitalism

THE GENERAL THEORY OF EMPLOYMENT, INTEREST, AND MONEY. By John Maynard Keynes. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

IN CONTRAST to the general run of orthodox economists, Mr. Keynes has distinguished himself throughout the depression by proposing concrete measures for alleviating the crisis. While neither his own government nor that of the United States can be said to have given his suggestions a fair trial, his views have unquestionably influenced policy in both countries, though in a markedly different manner. His was one of the strongest voices in support of the easy-money and refunding policies of the British government, while his bold proposals for public-works expenditures, spurned in Britain, found favor with the Roosevelt Administration. Throughout this period Mr. Keynes has encountered vigorous opposition from his orthodox colleagues, who are patiently waiting for a reconstruction of economic life according to the copybook maxims of laissez faire theory.

It is these maxims, so firmly held by the majority of present-day economists, to which Mr. Keynes turns attention in the present book—his first important theoretical work since the "Treatise on Money" published five years ago. While accepting many of the postulates of orthodox dogma, he finds it necessary to modify certain of its basic assumptions. He starts by challenging the view—widely held by economists as well as business men—that reduction of real wages is the only known road to full employment. As against the contention of the classical theorists, Mr. Keynes maintains that there is often no way by which labor as a whole can reduce its real wage by means of voluntarily accepted cuts in money wages, and any attempt to do so only aggravates the fundamental difficulties. A reduction in wages may aid a single establishment to curtail its costs, and thereby make it possible for it to expand production and employment, but a general wage cut can only reduce consumption and accentuate the deflationary process. Although this conclusion is fully in line with everyday experience during the depression, Mr. Keynes is compelled to reconstruct a considerable portion of the classical theory in order to show why the traditional economists are wrong. His argument is so technical and detailed that it is impossible to do justice to it in the scope of a brief review, but at the risk of oversimplification it may be said to run somewhat as follows:

The national income, measured in terms of real wealth, is obviously dependent primarily on the level of employment. An increase in the number of persons engaged in productive activity should normally yield a larger aggregate product to be divided among the population. The volume of employment in turn tends to be fixed at a point where business yields the maximum profits. In determining the level of business activity which they believe will give the highest return, entrepreneurs are guided by the status of three variable factors: (1) the propensity of the population to consume; (2) the prospective yield of new capital investment; and (3) the current rate of interest.

A number of influences play upon the "propensity to consume," but the primary element is unquestionably the level of income. Most men will increase their expenditures for consumption as their income rises, though not to the full extent of their new income. Now a rise in employment and income can only come through an increase in investment. Any expansion in business activity requires capital. But investment cannot grow unless it is accompanied by a rise in consumption, for otherwise there would be no demand for the increased production. Nor can all of the new output be consumed, since there must be a margin of savings from which the capital can be drawn. It is possible to measure the effect of each new investment on the general level of employment, according to Mr. Keynes, by what he calls the "marginal propensity to consume." If the habits and psychology of a community are such that they consume, say, nine-tenths of each new unit of income, it follows that the total employment produced by increased public works, or any other new investment, will be ten times the amount of primary employment created by the new enterprise.

Business men will be inclined to invest in new capital equipment as long as the returns from such investment promise to be in excess of the current rate of interest. A rise in the interest rate discourages productive investment and reduces employment, while a lowering of the rate—within certain limits—tends to stimulate both. Thus while the orthodox economists assume that an increase in the interest rate would encourage savings

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and thereby promote investment, Mr. Keynes maintains that the only function of interest is to prevent people from hoarding; and if the public has confidence in the stability of economic conditions, 2 per cent may be fully as effective as 6 in accomplishing this result. He denies that the interest rate is affected under present conditions by fluctuations in either spending or investment, insisting that the rate is largely determined by tradition except where it is definitely controlled by the monetary authorities. Thus instead of being an automatic regulator of economic activity, as traditional theory has it, the rate of interest must be manipulated if it is to be helpful, and in the opposite direction from the change envisioned by orthodox theory. Thus a cut in real wages, instead of reducing the marginal demand for capital and thereby reducing the rate of interest and stimulating investment, would lower the "propensity to consume"—by redistributing income in favor of the *rentier* class—and probably lead to a postponement of investment and increased tendency to hoard.

Stripped of the technicalities which might baffle the lay reader, there is much similarity between Keynes's analysis and that of Moulton in the "Formation of Capital." Both find the key to our present economic difficulties in the tendency toward oversavings, which is accentuated by the maldistribution of income; both show that the new investment which is necessary to revive employment is dependent on consumption rather than on savings; and both would agree—in opposition to the orthodox school—that a reduction in wages is self-defeating in that it inevitably curtails consumption. But between a price-lowering and a wage-raising policy, Keynes chooses the latter on the ground that it is more likely to maintain full employment. And for some reason he does not follow out the logical trend of his thought by considering, in any detail, the effect of a redistribution of income as a means of increasing the "propensity to consume." Despite a considerable amount of evidence to the contrary, he clings to the view that low money rates together with public expenditures will stimulate investment sufficiently to offset the deficit purchasing power of the underprivileged. While admitting that governmental expenditures must do more than replace private expenditures if they are to be effective, he does not foresee the danger—as exhibited in the WPA—that government investment may have the effect of depressing wages and thereby accentuating the underlying disequilibrium.

It will be seen that the theoretical weakness of Mr. Keynes's position does not lie so much in the factors which he discusses as in those which he omits. He appears to assume, as do the orthodox economists whom he berates, a flexible or semi-flexible economic system which no longer exists, and he neglects the all-important phenomenon of an economy dominated by gigantic corporations and trade associations whose fundamental interests and policies are in conflict with the interests of society as a whole. Given the undeniable trend toward rigidity in our economic structure, the type of controls which he envisages are bound to become increasingly ineffective. This he tacitly admits in the final chapter when he suggests that it would be desirable ultimately to eliminate interest and advocates a more rigorous system of progressive taxation. Yet even these proposals, admirable though they are, seem to overlook the apparently irresistible counter-force exercised by monopolies and trusts, which utilize governmental power to strengthen their anti-social policies.

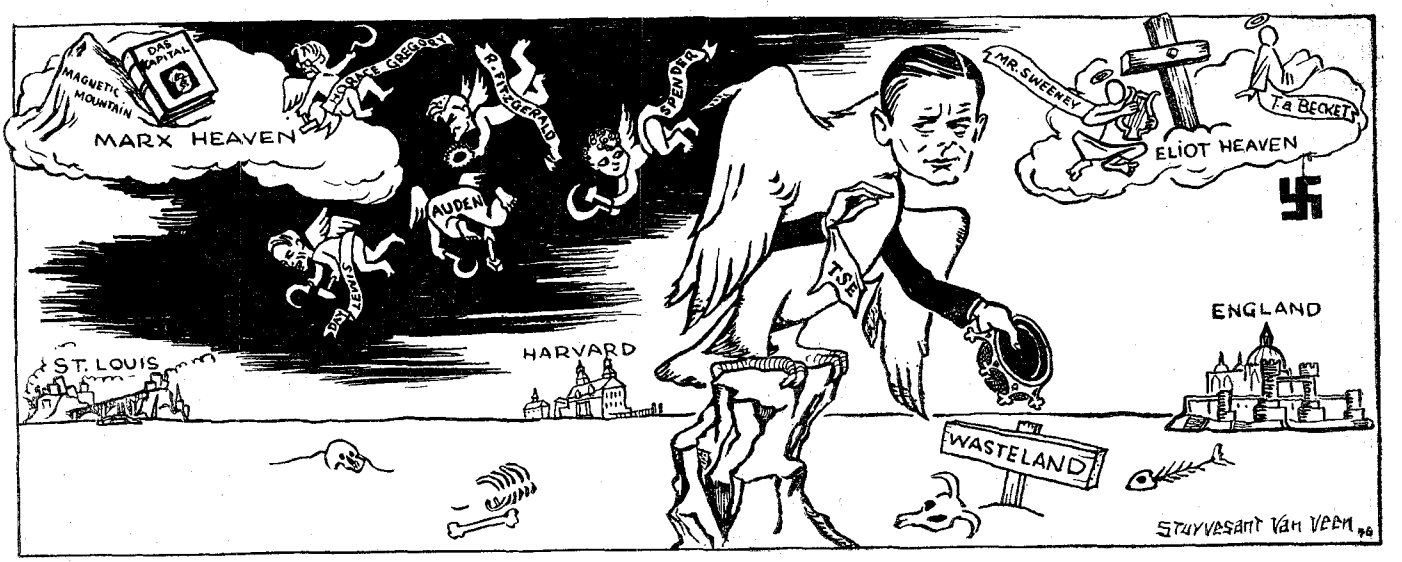
MAXWELL S. STEWART

Love in Connecticut

AS THEY REVELED. By Philip Wylie. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.

MR. WYLIE in "As They Reveled" has written about a group of people to whom sophistication is another word for sex. That very concept insures their being made a subject for satire; it also makes clear just how startling the satire is going to be. It also, I am afraid, makes clear how from time to time satire will take a back seat, and sex will be put on display as a diverting spectacle in its own right. Indeed, you need not be a passionate lover of satire in order to enjoy much of what goes on in these pages; for that matter, perhaps the less you love satire the better.

The people herein described did most of their reveling on a few jointly shared acres in Connecticut, but they also reveled now and then on Cape Cod, in Manhattan, and along the Jersey shore. There were four men and five women in all, and by the law of combinations and permutations nine people can be grouped and regrouped in a staggering number of ways. In "As They Reveled," what is more, they are. The two most interesting of Mr. Wylie's nine people are Alice, to whom all this open-shop philandering is new, but who learns, and



Moments

Mr. Eliot Wonders Why His Eaglets Have Flown in the Wrong Direction

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Claudette, a Southern homebreaker in her teens who is punished for not having a shred of character by soon not having a shred of reputation. Mr. Wylie is merciless with Claudette, but somewhat indulgent toward all the others—except the lowborn Charley Everest—and at the end most of the husbands are again in possession of their wives.

Mr. Wylie shows almost no insight in dealing with these people. He shows a certain worldly knowledge, but that is a different thing. It would be hard to avoid, of course, exposing their moral illiteracy and the infantile complacence with which they tumble in the hay. But other things that would seem equally hard to avoid—their leisure-class frivolity, their suburban brand of taste, their bankrupt minds—he has somehow strangely ignored. He has been satisfied to confine himself to love: "Sweet love," as he puts it, "love whereof even the shadows are rose-tinted. Love illimitable. Love unfettered. Modern, civilized, biochemical, endocrinological, adept, expert, unemotional, functional, promiscuous, unbigoted, and enlightened love." As for social criticism, Mr. Wylie seems to admire the suave Mr. Larch, who plays golf and learned how to dress at his Eastern university, much more than he admires the coarse Mr. Everest, who visits bowling alleys and never learned how to dress at all. His book abounds in distinctions of this sort, and though I will not affirm that they ruin him as a satirist, I fear they do not quite exempt him from the satire.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

A Quartet on Crime

FIGHTING THE UNDERWORLD. By Philip S. Van Cise. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

CRIME'S NEMESIS. By Luke S. May. The Macmillan Company. $2.

FAREWELL, MR. GANGSTER! By Herbert Corey. D. Appleton-Century Company. $3.

CHEESE IT—THE COPS! By Emanuel H. Lavine. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

READING four books on crime in rapid succession has made me very nervous. Instead of going quietly to bed, I have taken to going down to the Tombs at night and looking anxiously under all the beds to make sure no burglars are there. To make matters worse, I found one a few nights ago. Apparently his telephone call to the professional bondsmen had gone astray. We fixed that up, you may be sure, and the bondsman and the lawyer came right over. As a matter of fact, they were already on their way, hanging on the tail-board of a patrol wagon full of crap-shooters that would need to be sprung. Within half an hour the burglar, tool kit in hand, was back in overalls and ready to go to work. That night, for once, I went to sleep happy, knowing that a couple of adjournments of the trial would give the good fellow time to earn his fees for lawyers and bail bonds. One thing I like about criminals is that they try to pay as they go; there is none of this business of running into debt when a little extra work—at night, if need be—will keep the business of beating the rap on a strictly cash basis.

For a person like myself, through whose hands—figuratively speaking—about 80,000 offenders pass each year, too many books on crime at once are always confusing. Take, for example, the four I have just gulped down. Mr. Lavine wants me to believe that the cops are crooked and incompetent and that crime flourishes unchecked. Mr. Corey, on the other hand, makes it clear that the G-men combine the qualities of Sherlock Holmes and the United States Marine Corps and have driven all the crooks into the nearest ocean. Mr. Lavine insists that the cops beat the crooks with rubber hose, but Mr. May says they beat them with microscopes, chemical analyses, moulage, and ballistics. Only Colonel Van Cise's theory leaves me unconfused and in accord. He says that the bunco men are always with us and always will be, so long as people try to get something for nothing and thereby label themselves suckers.

I started to skim through Colonel Van Cise's book because it seemed to me rather a thick tome to come out of a single prosecution, and that a Denver case now fifteen years old. But I read it avidly, page after page. Such a case carries no date line, is never localized. The con men are the one enduring group in crime: they never go out of date, never stop working, never confine themselves to one locality, never stop corrupting law-enforcement officials, and seldom reform, even on their death-beds. I think their idea of heaven is a place where everyone is an Oklahoma oil man and there are no cops, prosecutors, or sheriffs with whom you have to split.

Those of us who knew Denver in the gay twenties, when those amazing owners of the Denver *Post,* Bonfils and Tammen, were still in power, will read "Fighting the Underworld" with special interest. (Note to Editor: Their power is gone. No fear of libel suits.) Denver was the last of the great cities to lose its frontier qualities; probably it has not lost them yet. It was the Mecca for all the men in the mountain states who made money fast and stood ready to lose it with equal speed. Naturally, it was also the Mecca for all the con men who worked the Florida resorts in the winter, the Southwest all the year round out of Kansas City, and Denver in the summertime.

Denver swigged its crime raw fifteen years ago. Pickings were easier and richer than in any other city of its size in the country. For the police, too, there was a pot of gold at the end of every policeman's rainbow in those days. I was out there quite often in 1924-25, just after Colonel Van Cise had sent Lou Blonger and his gang of steerers and spielers to the pen. Highly respectable citizens gave me some hint of the extent to which a large city can be dominated by known crooks. The essence of the frontier philosophy, however, was given me by an old friend, an ex-convict. His wife had left him for a dashing young rancher down-state. He was planning to go down and kill them both when I met him in the Brown Palace Hotel. We rode around in his car all night while I argued that it would be bad for his children if he did it. He didn't do it, finally, but this is the one thought I remember of all he said that night: "If I go down there to kill them, the deacon of my church will loan me his gun to do the job with. It's the law of the desert, and it will hold good as long as there's alkali in the water."

It is a mystery to me why Colonel Van Cise, a new district attorney with nothing much but a vague idea that Denver need not be dominated by grafters, should have thought he could beat the law of the desert, when Denver was still little more than a lawless frontier town. How he did it is fascinating reading. The chief man he got, Lou Blonger, virtual boss of Denver and fixer for Florida, makes Dutch Schultz look like a piker.

"Crime's Nemesis" deals with the scientific detection of crime. It loses entertainment value for the casual reader by contrast with an earlier and better-written book by Henry Morton Robinson called "Science vs. Crime." To the professional reader, however, it has greater value because Luke May is a highly competent scientific investigator who is writing about his own cases. A modest man writing about himself and his own work naturally tones everything down; Colonel Van

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Cise, by the way, evaded the issue by writing very effectively in the third person.

Similarly, "Farewell, Mr. Gangster!" deals with the same subject and drew on the same sources as Courtney Riley Cooper's "Ten Thousand Public Enemies." Corey's book is more informative on federal machinery and is good reading, but Cooper skimmed the cream off the J. Edgar Hoover milk a year ago.

Lavine, on the other hand, has the good fortune to have been preceded by an even worse book, written by a fellow-reporter employed by the same newspaper service—Martin Mooney's "Crime Incorporated." If two worse book have been written on the subject of crime in the last decade, I will gladly read them as a penance. I am not a loud booster for the police of our American cities. They often are dumb-bells and sometimes grafters. They usually have the physical courage of the Bull of Bashan and very often the brains also. But it is dirty and cheap business to write a book that leaves one with the impression that police officers are all dumb brutes, without quoting one single grand-jury report, one bit of documentary evidence, one line more authoritative than an undated newspaper paragraph. The police deserve to be spared loose denunciation without documentation.

There is good meat in the books by Van Cise, Corey, and May. They are worth-while reading for the professional and better-than-ordinary reading for the layman. But if there is any meat in Mr. Lavine's book, it is certainly tripe.

AUSTIN H. MACCORMICK

The Economy of Plenty

$2500 A YEAR. By Mordecai Ezekiel. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

IN THIS interesting and readable volume Dr. Ezekiel proposes what his publishers describe as "a definite and practical means for accomplishing the change in our economic society from scarcity to abundance." The author's immediate goal, to be reached within a few years, is a minimum family income of $2,500 a year, or slightly less than the average family income in 1929. This would require a national income about $24,000,000,000 above the actual total in that year, if all of the increase were used to bring lower incomes up to the $2,500 level and higher incomes were left unchanged.

The author's contention that a family needs at least $2,500 a year—an income enjoyed by less than one-third of our families even in 1929—to maintain a comfortable standard of living can be accepted without question. And we have ample resources, technical facility, and labor supply to provide every family with at least $2,500 if the additional income were properly distributed. This would be possible even on the basis of the modest Brookings estimate of productive capacity, which takes full account of the limitations of weather and consumer-buying habits.

Dr. Ezekiel does not hold the individual business man responsible for this paradox of poverty in the midst of potential plenty. He attributes it to the malfunctioning of the profit system in an era of mammoth corporations, overhead costs, and "administered prices," and to a lack of "coordination between all segments within each industry and between different industries." Since the market for his product at a profitable price is limited, no single business man can expand his operations unless a general increase in buying power can be brought about. "What is needed is some method by which production, buying power, and markets for goods can thus be increased all at the same time." This explanation is undoubtedly sound as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough to explain how business ever recovers from a depression or why business operating under the modern profit system was able to produce more than twice as many goods and services in 1929 as it produced in 1932.

So much for the author's diagnosis of our present difficulties. His prescription for the malady is far less convincing. It is extremely doubtful, at least in the opinion of this reviewer, whether the patient could ever be made to swallow the medicine, or whether it would produce a cure. What Dr. Ezekiel proposes is an "industrial-adjustment" program whereby individual producers would be induced by the offer of cash benefit payments to enter into "voluntary" contracts with the government to increase output, to employ more labor, and, in most cases, to pay higher wages while charging lower prices. The money for benefit payments would be obtained from production taxes collected from all producers, similar to the AAA processing taxes. Production schedules and benefit and tax rates would vary from industry to industry with the aim of securing a planned and coordinated expansion of business and employment. The individual business man would be induced to cooperate by the tax-benefit device and by the hope that profits would increase, in spite of lower prices, as the result of larger sales volume.

Entirely aside from the question of constitutionality, of which the author is aware, and the tremendous administrative complexity of any such plan, which he greatly underestimates, Dr. Ezekiel has made no attempt to show what amount of tax and benefit would be sufficient to induce the individual producer to agree to enlarge his output, lower his prices, and increase his direct production costs by raising wages and hiring more men. The individual business man would still be under the yoke of the profit system. He would have to decide whether the benefit was large enough to be worth the risk of higher costs, lower prices, and perhaps the burden of an unsalable surplus on his hands. Of course if, as Dr. Ezekiel hints, the government stood ready to purchase surplus output, producers would be happy to operate at full capacity, and without benefit payments. If the "ever-normal-granary" idea were applied to manufactured goods, the rest of the Ezekiel plan could be scrapped forthwith, for the building boom resulting from the construction of government warehouses would soon end the depression. But then the government would be cursed by the profit system.

The administrative machinery for the industrial-adjustment program would be a blend of the AAA and the NRA. At the top would be the Industrial Adjustment Administration. Then would come Industry Authorities, much like NRA code authorities but with labor and consumer representatives and inter-industry and regional committees. Dr. Ezekiel thinks administration would be simpler than under the NRA, but it seems to me that it would be so difficult as to be wholly impossible. NRA code authorities in most industries were responsible only for enforcing minimum wages, which applied to only a small fraction of the working force, and maximum hours, and this they did badly in most cases. Industrial adjustment would call for insuring compliance with contracts involving fixing of prices, hours, wage rates, and production. If we are to have production for use instead of for profit, complete government ownership and operation of the nation's industries would appear an easier task of administration than Dr. Ezekiel's industrial-adjustment scheme.

FREDERIC DEWHURST

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Journey for Journey's Sake

CROSSROADS OF THE CARIBBEAN SEA. By Hendrik de Leeuw. New York: Julian Messner. $3.

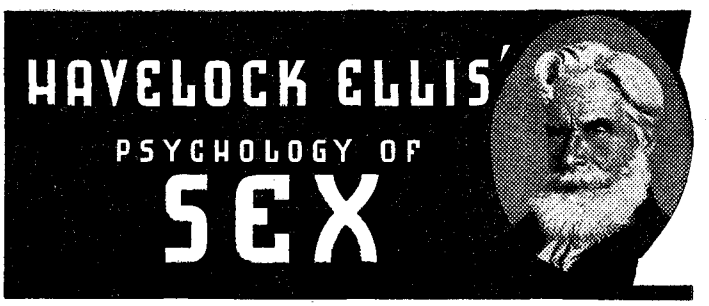
WHY are so many contemporary travel books banal and dull? A comparison of most of them with the accounts of voyagers who traveled in the days when to go to the remote parts of the world meant that a man was forced to stake his life against the risks of an unknown country and untamed natives reveals a difference that is startling. The reason for the quality of the earlier books, I have come to believe, is that their writing was incidental to the business in hand—the discovery of new territory, the assumption of the "white man's burden," the finding of treasure or of a new product to exploit. The travelers traveled for a purpose, and, their missions finished, they reported their successes or their failures. What has been said does not apply to all books of travel written today, for there are still those who go to the far corners of the earth with a purpose other than that of gathering material for a book. The volume of the late L. M. Nesbitt entitled "Hellhole of Creation" has the quality of the earlier books of travel; so have the books of Peter Freuchen.

The book under review is peculiarly undistinguished. There is nothing very bad about it, no particular distortion of truth, no special padding. One quite agrees with the author's claim concerning the distinctive character of his book: "Unless I am very much mistaken, this is the first work to treat of Netherlands Guiana, Venezuela, Curaçao, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic within the compass of one volume"; but this is no great justification for any volume. The territory he describes is interesting enough. But Mr. de Leeuw adds about as much to our knowledge of the places he visited as would the diary of someone who might take one of those "vacation trips" that carry people from New York back to New York by way of Haiti, Curaçao, Venezuelan ports, Trinidad, and, let us say, the Virgin Islands.

The book is not only dull; it is almost unbearably bright and cheerful. Mr. de Leeuw travels in the best of all possible worlds. Paramaribo is spotless and clean and the people are oh, so interestingly dressed. The Bush Negroes are nature's noblemen—even to the "naiveness" of their sex life, which as given is no more naive than the author's presentation of it. One never suspects that beneath the magnificence of Caracas lay the tension of the Gomez dictatorship, or that the "great man" himself, adulation of whom is thickly spread, had ever interfered with the happiness of anyone. The picturesqueness of Curaçao is well portrayed, but the manner of telling gives the island a sticky-sweet quality that repels rather than attracts. The accounts of Haiti and Santo Domingo are even more superficial. In one respect Mr. de Leeuw has made a mark as an innovator. Perhaps because he was so interested in presenting a picture that should be bright and full of good-will, he stresses the absence of filth in the streets of the Haitian capital. He happens to be entirely correct; one congratulates him on having been the first to record the fact.

The book is illustrated with sketches by the author. It is to be suspected that just as he has followed the writings of others who have described the places he visited, so he has been inspired by the drawings of his better-known countryman, Hendrik Willem van Loon. A bibliography is appended to the book, but it is carelessly made and consists of so miscellaneous a collection of titles that it can be of little use.

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS



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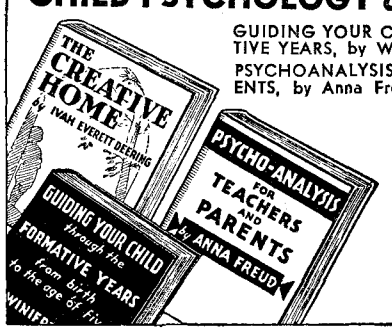
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Shorter Notices

MONOGRAM. By G. B. Stern. The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

The author of "The Matriarch" has turned the solemn task of autobiography into something of a game. From three arbitrarily chosen objects, each long-possessed and dear, she follows a trail of association, winding and doubling on itself in an intricate curving pattern, until at the end she has spread out, like a map with pictures, a panorama of her mind. It is a detached and worldly mind, carrying its worldliness like a cockade, witty, malicious, exciting. It enjoys, among other things, the Marx brothers, Jane Austen, Elsie Dinsmore, the sense of being well dressed, the analysis of snobbery, the baiting of professors, pictures, wine, and revenge. Persuasive, unhurried, the thought travels along the glittering plain, and the reader goes gaily with it. We climb no mountains, but neither do we stumble over any molehills. There are no forbidding areas marked "unexplored." And the region of outer darkness, if it exists, is nowhere indicated on the map.

TO THE MOUNTAIN. By Bradford Smith. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

This is a first novel of less than first caliber which has certain definite and admirable virtues. It is a modern love story of Japan which includes the political and social unrest agitating the young people and at the same time admits the strength of the ancient tradition of filial obedience. Because of her parents' bitter poverty a young girl is sold into prostitution; after a year of training she is claimed by an elderly man who wishes to keep her for himself. Bought out of her trade by a benevolent philanthropist, she falls in love with the son of her first customer, who loves her in return. It is impossible for them to marry; the young man's father would forbid it, and the young lovers cannot quite free themselves from the old tradition. They commit suicide. All this is certainly not new or even particularly striking. But Mr. Smith has rendered an atmosphere and has portrayed character with commendable success. He tells us that his young girl is lovely, composed, dutiful, quiet; and so she is, as he depicts her. His young man is quiet, too, although he is torn between the old life and the new. The whole story, indeed, is imbued with gentleness, order, and peace. In other words, Mr. Smith has taken the rather too familiar material of fiction and transformed it into something of his own making. This is nothing less than creative writing.

DRAMA

The Devil's Tunes

LAST year Robert E. Sherwood's "The Petrified Forest" was a delight to its audiences, a godsend to its actors, a gilt-edged investment for its producers, and an embarrassment to no one except those of us whose business it is to break butterflies on wheels. Our problem was the problem of deciding whether or not it really was merely one of the lepidoptera safely to be treated as such, and to this day I am not quite sure just how seriously I ought to have taken the

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gaudy creature which flitted gaily about while ostensibly discoursing upon one of the grimmest of topics—namely, the social and spiritual bankruptcy of modern life. One expects that a man who goes about crying "Woe to Israel" shall behave with something of the prophet's uncouthness, and it is more than a little disconcerting to find him delivering his message with all the disarming facility of the parlor entertainer. Mr. Sherwood was not merely skilful. He was positively slick. And yet what he had to say still seems to me to have been both interesting and sound.

His latest play, "Idiot's Delight," acted by the Lunts and presented by the Guild at the Shubert Theater, is the same, only more so. The audiences find even greater entertainment, the actors are even more perfectly suited, and the producers will be even more substantially enriched. At the same time the theme—war—is, if anything, even more grim, while the manner and methods are even more conspicuously those of the slickest contemporary stagecraft. Whatever else "Idiot's Delight" may or may not be, it is the result of the most accomplished showmanship exhibited in New York since "Broadway" set a new fashion, and, indeed, there is much in both the pace and the methods by which the pace is maintained to suggest those of that phenomenal melodrama. Leaving aside for a moment the question of Mr. Sherwood's ultimate seriousness, the chief difference is that whereas "Broadway" used its theatrical virtuosity to make a shabby and conventionally sentimental tale acceptable to an audience which would have laughed it off the stage had the presentation been anything like as ingenuous as the story, "Idiot's Delight" uses a very similar virtuosity to enliven a theme which, for all its pertinence, is not very well suited to the purpose of enticing into the theater those who demand entertainment along with whatever else they may get.

The scene of the play is a resort hotel high in the Italian Alps. The chief characters are the leader of a group of night-club entertainers (Mr. Lunt), an international munitions magnate (Francis Compton), and his mistress, (Miss Fontanne)—later revealed as an erstwhile vaudeville performer who had been the great love of Mr. Lunt's varied life. Imminent war hangs over the proceedings, and the final curtain descends upon the reunited lovers clinging together while bombs rain down upon the airplane base just outside the window.

None of the gaudy situations obviously possible from this set-up is missed, and much of the time the action is kept going by means of a series of "gags," both verbal and practical, some of which are clever and original, some of which—for example, the verbal one consisting of Mr. Lunt's remark "I'm afraid you've been betrayed" to the girl who asks the value of a coin given her by an Italian admirer, and the practical one executed when he demonstrates excitement by putting his fist through a straw hat—are adaptations of material very decidedly in the public realm. The fact remains nevertheless that the effect is irresistibly lively and—what is more important as well as more puzzling—that despite all the gags Mr. Sherwood manages frequently to treat his serious theme with no little effectiveness. The speech in which Miss Fontanne describes an air raid to her munitions-selling lover is, to take a single example, hair-raising, and if the author's main contention—namely, that men are too emotional and too childish to carry to a successful issue any plan for abolishing war—is not especially encouraging, it is at least tenable enough as well as grim enough. When all has been said and done, there is no doubt about the fact that despite all the comic interludes the sense of the folly and the

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horror of war has been conveyed about as effectively as it has ever been conveyed upon the stage.

Perhaps to those who object that the two aspects of his play are radically incongruous Mr. Sherwood would reply what the Salvation Army is said to have replied when criticized for its habit of singing hymns to the latest and sometimes the least respectable of contemporary airs: "We see no reason why the devil should have all the best tunes." Leaving aside the question of artistic integrity, I do not know just how much practical justification there is for this attitude. I do not know whether or not "The Saloon Must Go, Boom, Boom" has actually saved more souls than the Gregorian Chant. It is a nice problem, implying a great deal with which those who are concerned primarily with social effectiveness will have to deal; and I can say only that I am at least pretty sure that—whatever the result—a great many more people will expose themselves to "Idiot's Delight" than usually expose themselves to treatments of similar subjects by our more uncompromising dramatists.

Before I leave the production as a whole I should like to enlarge for a moment upon the skill with which it has been tailored to fit Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne. Their mannerisms are many, but each of them becomes an asset in these particular roles, and if any further inducement to the general public were necessary it would be afforded by the fact that it can see two favorites at their best. The Lunts are managing to act the part while remaining very conspicuously themselves, and such matters as Miss Fontanne's blond wig or her husband's hoofing exhibitions take on, for the audience, something of the character of a family joke.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

FILMS

Byron in the U. S. S. R.

"DUBROVSKY," the new Russian film at the Cameo, is based on an unfinished novel by Pushkin, and Boris Livanov as its hero is all that a novel by Pushkin would have him be. He is dark and handsome; his face is visited by many moods the only explanation of which is the midnight secret of his romantic personality; he falls out with society, or rather with that portion of it with which his life has been identified, and somewhat after the manner of Robin Hood leads a band of peasants to revolt against the landowners who oppress them; and he dies in a quixotic raid upon the coach in which his lost love rides with her bridegroom. He is, in other words, the perfect Byron of Pushkin's imagination. And so powerful was Pushkin's imagination that "Dubrovsky" has neither more nor less to say about the Marxist war than Byron would have had. I do not happen to know what standing Pushkin has at the moment as a revolutionary, but the question is perhaps immaterial in view of the completeness with which his tone has been taken in this film. The hero is purely, in the romantic sense, an individual; he has no class significance that I can see. His revolt is not a revolution; it is a series of guerrilla raids against the landowners who have dispossessed him. One by one their houses burn and fall while Dubrovsky lives on a mountain side with worshipful mujiks to guard his tent and do his bidding. They have followed him into the wilderness because of their personal attachment to him, and because their new life is picturesque they love him all the more. There is only one house which remains intact as Dubrovsky dies. But since it is the house of the infamous nobleman Troyekurov, and since it is Troyekurov who stole Dubrovsky's estate from his father and himself, our last glimpse is of the mujiks filing in to kill their hero's enemy. Need it be told that Troyekurov dies so late for the reason that Dubrovsky has fallen in love with his beautiful daughter Masha, and likes to stand by the piano while she sings or to walk with her in the moonlight while his faithful followers champ their impatient bits in the surrounding darkness?

Ivanovsky seems, then, in his direction of the film to have made little or no attempt at modernization, or shall we say at doctrinization, of the romantic melodrama before him. Indeed, he has gone in for all the romantic melodrama of which he and his studio were capable. If the result is something less than first-rate, the reason may be that the Russian studios have a long road to travel before they can revive the suppressed themes, say, of love and laughter. To want such things in art is not necessarily to have them right away. Most of the Russian films I have seen since October have been feeble because of their failure in these directions. "Three Women," for example, which preceded "Dubrovsky" at the Cameo, was positively sickly after the point where one of its heroines began to be in love with one of its heroes. Until then, and particularly through the portions dealing with the childhood of the heroines, the achievement was magnificent; beginning then it degenerated into scenes of amateur ogling, of puppy-love pantomime, as if a race of people otherwise stalwart and mature had paused to have its picture taken at an amusement park. And as with love, so with laughter; the winter's comedy has been pitiful in its attempts to catch up with a world which for all I know laughs entirely too much, and too vacantly. The Russian film is still at its best when it is utterly serious and utterly unromantic. I hope it is not trying too hard all at once to cease being those things.

"These Three" (Rivoli) succeeds rather well in translating "The Children's Hour," that painful and popular play about a schoolgirl whose whispers wrecked the lives of two teachers, into the language of Hollywood; which means among other things that the supposed sin is modified to mere adultery. Not that it needs to matter what the accusation is; the drama is the thing. The drama in this case depends very much for its effect upon the acting of the juveniles, and the acting of Bonita Granville as Mary bears its share of the responsibility admirably. So does the acting of Marcia Mae Jones as Rosalie; indeed, the pair of them have not been surpassed in my experience by any children of the American studios. They are in fact superior in power to the principals, Miriam Hopkins and Merle Oberon, who behave intelligently but who never give the illusion that the school in which they are supposed to be teachers is actually a school. This is partly because they must play with Joel McCrea, who never is convincing as anything, and partly because the gesture of their transforming a ramshackle country house into a spickspan academy is quite broadly unbelievable. As to Harold Lloyd, whose comedy "The Milky Way" (Paramount) was announced as a side-splitter, I have nothing to report beyond the conviction that he is heavier than ever. I have never found him funny; he works too hard. Charlie Chaplin and the Marx Brothers are said to be hard workers too, but an audience would not suspect it; whereas this lugubrious fellow with the glasses bends himself double with an amount of visible effort which in its very self is a guaranty that we shall not do so.

MARK VAN DOREN

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Letters to the Editors

"M-DAY"

Dear Sirs: In his review of "M-Day" in your issue of April 1 Mr. Walter Millis makes some serious charges. The fact that he violently disagrees with several parts of the thesis, even to the point of calling them "fantastic," is neither surprising nor alarming. Those who are familiar with Mr. Millis's interpretation of war causes will find his reaction in this instance perfectly normal. However, he makes two charges which *are* serious.

He charges the author with "lamentable carelessness," but offers no further proof of this charge than the statement that "at one point she puts into Mr. Baker's mouth the words of his biographer." This is simply not true. If Mr. Millis will take the pains to refer to Frederick Palmer's biography of Newton D. Baker (the volume and page numbers are given in the footnotes of "M-Day"), he will find that any words of Mr. Baker's quoted from that source are recorded in the biography as a direct quotation. Unless Mr. Millis knows of some rule which forbids quoting a quotation, he is wholly unjustified in his contention. His further remark that an "unwarranted twist" is given to Mr. Baker's statement by "associating it with events happening months after the time referred to" cannot be answered in the absence of specific details.

The second charge is even more serious. He says: "Miss Stein . . . makes extensive use not only of the committee hearings but of information which it did not place on public record." What is his authority for charging that material that is not yet on public record has been used? Mr. Millis was in no way connected with the Senate Munitions Committee, so that he could not have derived this bit of information from that source. As a matter of fact, Senater Nye had the complete manuscript and did not raise a single objection to it. Does Mr. Millis know the committee's record better than does Senator Nye?

It so happens that Thomas W. Lamont of J. P. Morgan and Company, in one of his several attempts to block the publication of "M-Day," made the same charge. However, when he wrote down his objections to the book in a memorandum addressed to the publishers, he not only failed to make this charge but emphasized that the book suffers because it does not include the evidence introduced into the committee's *final* hearings. Mr. Millis, unlike Mr. Lamont, does not hesitate to put the charge in writing. He owes it to the author, to the committee whose secretary's name he drags into the picture, and to his own readers to explain the source of the information which led him to make a charge both unfair and untrue.

ROSE M. STEIN

Pittsburgh, March 29

Dear Sirs: On page 107-8 of her book Miss Stein says: "Even the strongest advocates of preparedness, admits Secretary Baker, 'never breathed a word suggesting that a single soldier should ever be sent to Europe.' " The citation is to Palmer's "Newton D. Baker," Vol. I, p. 52, where the words clearly appear as those of Palmer, not Baker. They refer to the preparedness agitation of the early summer of 1916 but are introduced without explanation of this fact in support of the contention that up to "and after" the declaration of war in April, 1917, "no one admitted" the possibility of sending a great army to Europe—which seems to me unwarranted.

It was Miss Stein's own remark (page 296-97) that "information divulged to the Senate Munitions Committee, although not made part of that committee's record, indicates that similar action was taken . . . by the British government," as well as her occasional more general comments upon the committee's labors and researches, which gave me the impression that she had been able to utilize material not made part of the public record. Frankly, it never occurred to me that my remark to this effect could be regarded as a "charge"; certainly, I intended by it no accusation of bad faith or of any other sort and am, of course, happy to withdraw a remark which seems to have been open to such misinterpretation.

WALTER MILLIS

New York, April 2

Dear Sirs: You have sent us a copy of a letter by Rose M. Stein which, we understand, you plan to print. We must call your attention to an incorrect statement in Miss Stein's letter: "It so happens that Thomas W. Lamont of J. P. Morgan and Company, in one of his several attempts to block the publication of 'M-Day'. . ."

The publication of "M-Day" was delayed about four weeks because of questions raised concerning it by Mr. Lamont, but it would not be correct to say that Mr. Lamont attempted to *block* publication of the book. Through the editorial offices of a New York publication, one of whose staff turned to Mr. Lamont as to one well acquainted with this field of literature for advice concerning the book, Mr. Lamont saw a set of galley proofs of "M-Day." After two preliminary telephone calls, raising certain questions concerning the book, Mr. Lamont, at our request, sent us a memorandum outlining his findings in "M-Day." His memorandum did not deal with the questions raised over the telephone but called attention to facts and statements in the book which he considered inaccurate and misleading. His written communication was, of course, a private one, similar to communications we frequently receive which call attention to alleged inaccuracies in a publication. After consulting with Miss Stein we published "M-Day" on March 19.

CHARLES A. PEARCE,
Harcourt, Brace and Company

New York, April 3

MURDER, MARX, AND McCARTHY

Dear Sirs: I take pen in hand on the subject of murder and Mary McCarthy. To have her little Marxian holiday Miss McCarthy must needs exaggerate. The ideological detective story is hardly new. One of the earliest detective-story classics, Anna Katharine Green's "The Leavenworth Case," reeks with moral homiletics. The tales of M. P. Shiel are adorned with sociological disquisitions on progress. In one of them he even attempted to popularize the Nietzschean elimination of the unfit by means of a brotherhood especially devoted to this noble purpose. Chesterton's Father Brown stories are no more than allegories revealing the eternal verities of the Catholic faith. Our own Dashiell Hammett, in his best stories, has always seemed to me to be worth a whole pile of tracts of the American Civil Liberties Union, and I would earnestly recommend to professors of municipal administration his "Red Harvest," a beautiful and gory tale of how a private detective solved the

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problem of political corruption in a city of the second or third class by instigating feuds between the chief of police, the higher-ups, and the big shots, with the result that they exterminated each other.

Naturally some echoes of communism and fascism have crept into the contemporary detective story. But why does Miss McCarthy fail to mention that celebrated Marxist critic and detective-story writer, G. D. H. Cole? More than a decade ago he injected communism into the detective story. In his "The Death of a Millionaire," which pillories high finance, he has a Communist character lay down the correct party line on assassination. Thus: "I am a Communist—what you call Bolshevik. I avow it. I am proud of it. But do you not know that assassination is against the principles of my party? Mass action, yes: assassination, no—a thousand times no. Do you mistake me for a petty bourgeois conspirator?" And in a somewhat later story, "The International Socialist," Cole triumphantly proves that the suspected Communist most emphatically did not commit the murder.

I wish to inquire also why Sister McCarthy has elected not to mention one of the best of the recent American detective stories which is very much in point. I refer to Darwin L. Teilhet's "The Talking Sparrow Murders." Although the author is an American, the locale of the story is Nazi Germany. The principal murderer in the book turns out to be an American, but the whole spirit of the book is anti-Nazi.

May I ask Miss McCarthy as one addict to another: Is nothing to be sacred? Must we drag the shade of Marx into the world of the detective story? Are we never to relax? Her clarion call to the typewriter, "It remains for the writers of the left wing once again to borrow the methods of the bourgeoisie and to make murder the handmaiden not of Morgan but of Marx," leaves me cold. I doubt whether the subject will be on the agenda of the next Writers' Congress. After all murderers do bump off people with whose politics they are in entire agreement. And if the detective-story writer is to be allowed to have a Democrat murder a Republican, there is no good reason why he should not be allowed occasionally to make the murderer a Communist. As matters stand, the implications of the average detective story are all in favor of communism. It is a sad reflection on the owning classes when a captain of industry is removed by a nephew who is the chief beneficiary under his will. WILLIAM SEAGLE

New York, March 30

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

Dear Sirs: An error of fact appeared in the last of Max Lerner's articles on The Riddle of the Supreme Court in *The Nation* for March 25. While a correction has no effect on the conclusion, it is worth making to keep the record straight and for the light it throws on the part that fate plays in the composition of the Supreme Court. Calvin Coolidge did not appoint both Justices Stone and Sutherland as was stated. He did elevate Stone from the attorney-generalship after the latter had sat in the Cabinet for only nine months. But Justice Sutherland was appointed in 1922, three years earlier, by Warren G. Harding. Indeed, Justice Sutherland, as is not well enough remembered in these days of widespread discussion of the Supreme Court, was only one of Harding's four appointments to the supreme bench in his two years and five months in the Presidency. One other sitting member, Justice Butler (1922), and two late members, Chief Justice Taft (1921) and Justice Sanford (1923), were also Harding appointees. Yet it has been President Roosevelt's fate during a period of momentous constitutional decisions not to have had the opportunity to name a single Supreme Court member, notwithstanding the fact that his Administration is now in its fourth year. Granting that Presidents sometimes guess wrong on their Supreme Court choices, it is hard to believe that Roosevelt, given the opportunity of Harding, would not —in the exercise of one of his constitutional functions—have shaped a court which would have upheld the AAA or in any event would have sustained the Railroad Retirement Act, voided by a five-to-four-decision. IRVING D. HARD

St. Louis, March 25

MARBLE STRIKE

Dear Sirs: I have just read in your issue of April 1 the report of Anita Marburg on the Vermont marble strike against the Proctor Company. There was an error in indicating that "at last" the Department of Labor conciliator came to study the strike and made a report to the department under date of February 13.

I was in Rutland on December 12, immediately following the receipt of information by the department on the labor situation there, and my report was made on December 16, supplementing previous bulletins. It has since been followed by various other reports on two subsequent official trips to Barre and Rutland. The date given in the article in *The Nation* was in error by almost two months. I have also written Miss Marburg to this effect.

CHARLES J. POST,
Commissioner of Conciliation,
United States Department of Labor

Washington, March 28

A CHANCE FOR CONSUMERS

Dear Sirs: Many of your readers are probably unaware of the ominous labor situation which is developing in the Borden Company as the result of the company's refusal to renew its agreement with the drivers' union. If the company persists in its attitude, a strike is inevitable. Fortunately, a movement is spreading among Borden customers to help the employees by notifying the company to cease delivering milk until it has come to an agreement with the drivers' union.

It is seldom that we consumers have such a clean-cut opportunity to make our pressure felt. Even suburbanites are lending their aid, and the company is beginning to be disturbed at the loss of business. With prompt and widespread action a strike, with its attendant hardships, may yet be averted. F. A. B.

New York, March 28

FASCISM IN BRAZIL

Dear Sirs: Brazil is potentially one of the greatest nations in the world, not chiefly because of its immense natural resources, which are probably greater than those of any other country except the Soviet Union, but because of the profoundly original and creative character of the Brazilian people. This people is beginning to rise. Its first movement of self-expression inevitably has brought it in collision with the small oligarchy, gathered largely in two or three of the southern Brazilian states, who for two generations have been exploiting Brazil under orders of British and American imperialism. In response to this first stirring of a great people, the government is having recourse to the most brutal repressive measures. Seventeen thousand Brazilians are today in jail, among them a host of intellectual leaders—economists, writers, engineers, liberal statesmen. American opinion has great influence on the Brazilian government. If our voice is now heard in protest against this fascist suppression in the largest republic of the American continents, the Bra-

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zilian people will receive the kind of support it deserves from us.

Victory for reaction in Brazil will strengthen reaction not only throughout South America but in the United States and Great Britain—the real "rulers" of Brazilian economics.

WALDO FRANK

New York, March 24

HONOR TO DR. LINVILLE

Dear Sirs: I am sure you will want to record in the columns of *The Nation* the testimonial luncheon accorded Dr. Henry Richardson Linville at the Hotel Astor in New York City on Saturday, March 28. At this luncheon more than 600 men and women, many of them outstanding leaders in the cause of improved social, economic, and political conditions, assembled in public recognition of Dr. Linville's distinguished service in behalf of education and in honor of his seventieth birthday.

His activities in the past twenty years have been summed up by John Dewey:

> Both in war time and in peace Dr. Linville has been outspoken for the rights of teachers; more than any other individual he helped to bring about the repeal of the Lusk laws; he has aroused within the teaching ranks a determination to stand for academic freedom and intellectual integrity; he has given many faltering teachers the courage to stand by the dictates of their own conscience; through his efforts teachers enjoy higher salaries, fairer pensions, improved physical surroundings, a voice in curriculum making and administrative undertaking; always he has emphasized his unequivocal stand for identity of interest of all who worked with hand or brain, whether at desk or in factory, in classroom or in mill. Now as head of the New York Teachers' Guild, Dr. Linville is still valiantly leading the fight for better education, for social and civic welfare.

V. T. THAYER

New York, March 25

THE MONTJOY CASE

Dear Sirs: An indefinite stay in the execution of John Montjoy, Negro, of Covington, Kentucky, convicted for a criminal attack upon a white woman and sentenced to be hung early in April, has been won from the Kentucky Appeals Court by his attorney, William E. Wehrman. The case will now be taken to the United States Supreme Court. Alfred Bettman, Cincinnati attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, and a well-known constitutional lawyer, will appear for the defendant.

The bases on which this case will go up to the Supreme Court are as follows: (1) the alleged victim did not present testimony indicating an attack; (2) she failed to apply for proper medical examination; (3) Montjoy's confession was signed without a lawyer or friend of the accused present but in the presence of eight police officers; (4) Negroes were excluded from both the grand jury and trial jury; (5) the defendant was advised by counsel not to take the stand; and (6) the commonwealth attorney's plea aroused race prejudice.

MARY D. BRITE,
Secretary, Cincinnati Branch,
American Civil Liberties Union

Cincinnati, March 26

PROSTITUTION IN CHICAGO

Dear Sirs: The experience of New York City is similar with that of Chicago in regard to prostitution. However, the Chicago Department of Health attributes much of the city's prostitution to economic conditions. The Department of Health report says:

> There has been an increase of unemployed working girls, waitresses, sales clerks, and factory girls, many of them apparently respectable, among the women arrested for moral offenses. Although most of these girls have had multiple sex experiences, it is hardly fair to call them prostitutes; nevertheless, they are quite as important a factor in the spread of venereal diseases as are the prostitutes. In this group are often found young women ranging from eighteen to twenty-five years of age who, unlike the prostitute, are not under medical supervision; nor do they understand the value of cleanliness and prophylaxis. Often the first knowledge of the fact that they are venereally infected is brought to them as a result of the examination following their first arrest. . . .
>
> There is an urgent need for the establishment of quarters for the proper housing and care of indigent patients who are suffering from venereal diseases.

T. N. HALL

Chicago, March 20

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION. Price, 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Canadian: 50 cents a year additional. Foreign: $1 a year additional. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Dramatic Index, Index to Labor Periodicals, Public Affairs Information Service. Three weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for subscriber's change of address.

CONTRIBUTORS

EVELYN SEELEY first saw the activities of the chamber of commerce at close range when she covered the San Francisco general strike in 1934. She has been a newspaper woman in many parts of the country. Now she writes a column, "Free Press," in the *Guild Reporter*, the organ of the American Newspaper Guild.

CARLETON BEALS writes the second of two articles on the plight of the Alabama share-cropper and tenant farmer. Mr. Beals's impressions, as his articles plainly indicate, are always made at first hand. While he was in Alabama he slept in share-croppers' huts and shared with them their daily corn pone.

LILIAN T. MOWRER, wife of Edgar Ansel Mowrer, well-known foreign correspondent now in Paris, spent eight years as dramatic critic in Germany before Hitler came to power. Dramatic critics are probably as useless in the Third Reich today as good plays are scarce.

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